DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD)

Dyslexia Support and the Community of Practice Amongst Schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, UAE

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Christopher Blake

A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Christopher Blake……*Christopher Blake*….

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY OF THE THESIS

I hereby declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, contains no material previously published or written in any medium by another person, except where appropriate reference has been made.

Abstract

This thesis uses an exploratory, grounded theory methodology (GM) approach to seek, through constant comparison, an understanding of the extent to which dyslexia can be socially and contextually constructed. GM can be defined as an active, continuous systematic process of analytic steps, while simultaneously being open to proceed and explore a phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon is dyslexia, including the support and inclusive practises in schools to legitimately adhere to Special Educational Needs policy in schools (both locally and internationally) to cultivate diversity in education. In this thesis, I used GM, which includes semi-structured interviews (SSI), field notes, observations on learning support departments, school websites and school inspection reports, rather than follow a guided deductive of being an expert in the field of dyslexia support and a directed approach of content or GT. I decided to use GM to focus on building social and contextual relationships between data, which unlike GT can lead to an eventual endpoint, using GM I hope that instead my contextual data findings can generate and develop new areas of research. In short, using GM does not lead my research to an endpoint, but provides a new point to start, expand, and develop new research on dyslexia support and inclusion. Five schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE, each with a different curriculum, were included in the study. Interviews were conducted with school principals, special educational needs coordinators, and support teachers. Besides, 9 mothers with children identified with having dyslexia and one parent with a daughter identified with having dyslexia from Dubai were interviewed. The hypotheses were developed in line with the purpose of this research, which was to identify and explore the barriers and obstacles that can hinder effective support for dyslexia and inclusion, using the process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding through data analysis. This thesis concludes with suggestions for further, more extensive, and significant support for dyslexia, with active parental engagement, and schools being receptive to a community of shared practices and decisions on effective learning strategies that work for each child's dyslexia. Also, if schools say they are inclusive or follow the values underpinning inclusion, then they need to promote active awareness and understanding of dyslexia, with transparency and accountability regarding all concrete steps towards inclusion. This should include compulsory and continuous teacher training, which includes how to effectively screen for dyslexia and use an Individualized Education Program (IEP) effectively and investment in resource centres to support schools, teachers, parents, and learners within the community.

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Introduction

With little specific research towards disabilities and supporting inclusion in the UAE (Hayhoe, 2014), this thesis firmly contributes to knowledge in two major ways. Firstly, to provide the gaps in general knowledge towards disabilitiesby helping people, particularly children, parents, schools, and all stakeholders involved with understanding, identifying, and supporting dyslexia in education in the UAE. Secondly, my research is firmly placed in an international educational context within the inclusion and inclusive debate in education by illuminating data on the step's schools are taking towards inclusion and inclusive practices. Considering international reports have noted that the UAE is globally placed the second-largest international schools market, with estimates of 650,000 student enrolments (International Schools Database UAE, 2018-19) the way international schools value, manage, and respond to inclusion and inclusive practice for dyslexia and the larger SEN's becomes pivotal towards recognizing and understanding inequality in learning and the larger values of inequality within the communities education is placed.

This thesis explores the perceptions and experiences of dyslexia and how dyslexia is supported and managed among a group of five international schools in Abu Dhabi. Interviews were conducted with school principals, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), and special educational needs (SEN) headteachers to obtain information on dyslexia and its support management within the school. Data were also obtained from field notes obtained during school visits, school websites, and publicly accessible school inspection reports. Categories and themes were formed from the data analysis, and hypotheses were used to investigate the community of practice (Wenger, 2000) further by interviewing 10 parents with children identified with having dyslexia, including one parent and daughter who has dyslexia with comparative curriculum schools, but in Dubai.

This thesis follows the concerns and issues in SEN education regarding the identification and support of those learners with dyslexia and how to cultivate inclusive awareness and shared practices. After teaching in an international context for over 17 years, I became aware that teaching brings a keener awareness of what one knows as well as of the many things one has yet to understand when it comes to communicating knowledge (Savignon and Wang, 2003). The following section provides a contextual explanation of dyslexia and how this is supported through education internationally. Also, some of the difficulties and challenges experienced by

schools are discussed concerning the terms, practices, and support for inclusive education.

This research aims to offer a body of practical evidence on how five schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai define dyslexia, together with an understanding of how support and management are provided. This thesis will thereby contribute to the rising number of studies being conducted concerning internationalisation and inclusion for those with dyslexia and provide potential opportunities for practical ways that the challenges of inclusion can be overcome. Recognizing potential challenges and barriers in schools and the education system when supporting learners with dyslexia can highlight the help needed to achieve a better understanding of the issue, together with possible social interventions to support this achievement (Nelson and Liebal, 2017; Reid, 2013; Stampoltzis, Tsitsou and Papachristopoulos, 2018). Seeking evidence of how schools and parents respond to dyslexia and different learning needs can assist with understanding inclusion and inclusive practice towards curricula and the community of practice.

However, rather than seek inclusion as a result in education, educational inclusion and inclusive practices are seen as aspects of a process of adapting, organizing, and managing educational practices that prevent and remove barriers to all students through learning (Andreozzi and Pietrocarlo, 2017; Reid, 2012). Reviewing inclusion through diverse curriculum schools, each offering different values and culture, provides a deeper analysis of what Zhao (2018) refers to as the 'side effects' from expecting educational outcomes, but with different values placed on SEN policies and approaches towards inclusion and inclusive practice. My initial tentative hypothesis was to seek to what degree are these barriers of inclusion and inclusive practices similar or different amongst stakeholders and do these participants have a shared community of practice with supporting and managing dyslexia?

Abbreviations

ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
ADEK	[Abu Dhabi] Department of Education and Knowledge
BERA	British Education Research Association
BPS	British Psychological Society
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
COP	Code of Practice
CR	Critical realism
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (same department for Department for Employment and Skills)
DECRR	Dyslexia for Educational Consultation and Reading Rehabilitation
EDA	European Dyslexia Association
GT	Grounded theory
GM	Grounded methodology
IB	International baccalaureate
IDEA	Individual with Disabilities Act
ISO	International School Data Base
IEP	Individual education plan
KHDA	Knowledge and Human Development (Dubai equivalent of ADEC)
MoCD	Ministry of Community Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.
PISA	Programme for international student assessment
RAN	Rapid automatized naming
RTI	Response to intervention
SEN	Special education needs
SENCO	Special education needs coordinator
SEND	Special education needs and disabilities
SENDA	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act
SpLD	Specific learning difficulties
SSI	Semi-structured interview

1.2 Research Background

Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE is the largest of the seven emirates in the UAE, with 84% of the national landmass, with the countries president H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan as the UAE's leader, with the prime minister and vice president in Dubai is Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (ADEK online, 2020). In Abu Dhabi alone in 2018/2019, there were 68% of all students enrolled in one of the 198 private schools, offering 14 different curricula, with American, British, Ministry of Education, and Indian being the most popular (ADEK online, 2020). Abu Dubai (ADEK) SEN policy requires "all schools to provide appropriate educational support to students in the general education classroom, which includes matching the curriculum to meet the different learning needs of each student" (ADEK online, 2020) In Dubai there are currently 209 international schools, with 17 curricula and 289195 students, with 73% Expats and 27% UAE Nationals in private schools (Knowledge and Human Development Authority online, 2020). Besides, it has been reported that amongst international schools the British curriculum predominates as the most common curriculum in the Middle East, followed by American and IB respectively (International Survey Consortium, 2017). In the UAE, surprisingly, there is almost no research on dyslexia support, the way dyslexia are managed towards a community of practise and how schools are moving towards inclusion in education and beyond. Furthering this, there is currently very little research on assessing dyslexia in Arabic, which ultimately impacts effective support. Although it would be a challenge to cover how dyslexia is supported and managed amongst the wide range of schools and curriculum in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, I did however select both these common and popular curriculums, as well as others including Indian and UAE national curriculums for my research.

The Federal Law No.29 of 2006 Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the UAE follows the promotion of inclusion with other international policies on SEN and inclusion. For example, in the UK some schools promote inclusion and call themselves inclusive with pockets of excellence' in schools when it comes to staff collaboration and with similar values and commitments when developing a practice of inclusion that extends into the student body and parent and other community stakeholders (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010, p.402). However, with so many different private schools, there is a worrying gap between the resources devoted to inclusive awareness and training for dyslexia, how to identify dyslexia, and practical ways to differentiate material and curricula in schools and within the classroom.

Moreover, many international schools are private, and information about how or whether the policy on SEN is effectively adhered to and used across the school and implemented into the curriculum amongst the teachers is not always available. Importantly, experiences of those directly affected with learners/children with dyslexia are often not heard, and their parents not just having various perceptions on the way dyslexia is supported and managed in school, but also parents identifying characteristics of individuals at school that prevent barriers towards inclusion (Suze et al., 2017). With the lack of coherence and inconsistency towards collective support, it is hardly surprising that support is often not transparent in and across education.

Moreover, from my 17 years of teaching experience from five different schools in the UK and overseas, I am aware that information is not shared effectively, and teachers can be accused of working in isolation, some even unable to adjust their practices effectively. Despite some teachers having good intentions towards supporting learning and learners with dyslexia, there is often a deficit of training opportunities and materials for teachers and schools to cater to a wide range of SEN learners. Moreover, the way support is identified and provided in international schools differs greatly, and placing international schools outside national systems of standardised and strict accountability can produce different experiences, qualifications, interpretations, and approaches towards inclusion and what it means to be inclusive (Schulka, 2019).

This thesis is based on a social-cultural interpretivist approach, through which my data collection and research methods are based and adapted from grounded theory (GT) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and developed with an emphasis on deductive methods of testing hypotheses and termed Grounded Methodology (GM), (Hayhoe, 2012), to develop narratives to reflect original problems gained by analysing the relationships of constructive knowledge and the experiences from the data collection given by my participants. A narrative forms part of a rich description by reporting significant events, emerging relationships among the data (Becker, 1993). Narrative description can also not only illuminate the phenomenon but also supply practical ideas and knowledge that can develop a theory (Sutton and Staw, 1995). The purpose of using a narrative approach to research was to avoid predetermined ideas and themes on how dyslexia is perceived and supported, focusing on models of inclusion and notions of being inclusive in schools.

1.3 Key Research Questions

My specific research questions were based on the literature review and my research methodology. It should be noted that my research questions were formulated first and then underpinned by my specific interview questions.

Principal research questions:

1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
1a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?
2. How can an effective community of practice be established in Abu Dhabi to support learners with dyslexia?
2a. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses?
3. To what degree are these principles, support, and provisions recognised as similar by parents and children and professionals working within a community of practice?
3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know learning targets and objects are being met?

1.4 Scope of the research

The study consisted of five schools, with interviews conducted with five school principals, four SENCOs and one SEN teacher. In addition, field notes of school visits, access to school websites, and mandatory public-school inspection reports by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) were included. One school did not have a SENCO, but a SEN teacher was responsible for the special education department. It is clear to me that five schools may draw the issue of generalisation (Hammersley, 2008) and might present results that suggest an inaccurate picture of all schools and support based on these specific experiences and perspectives. Furthermore, identifying special needs and specifically, dyslexia, can be problematic as these concepts are broad, complex and can be necessarily separated. However,

the data drawn from these sources were categorised and compared adopting a GM follows a similar GT approach, which uses constant comparisons to form concepts, categories, and patterns from the data. Once categories were identified, from the interviews with school staff, the development of further the hypothesis and research questions were written for the interviews with parents of children identified with having dyslexia in Dubai (with the same curriculum as schools in Abu Dhabi). The three categories identified were 1) parental engagement/involvement, 2) effective identification and assessment of learners with dyslexia, and 3) teacher training and understanding of dyslexia.

It should be noted that the following literature review was researched and written during conducting my empirical data collection and analysis. Using a GM flexible approach meant that the data and concepts from my data were contextual, specific to those participants and schools involved, and not gained from any existing literature. This approach follows the same data collecting and data analysis steps as GT, open coding, axial coding and selective coding. However, a GM approach focuses deductively at the process of studying the phenomenon of specifically human social, culturally contextual relationships in education and provide narratives with responses that address my research questions (Hayhoe, 2020) and not a conclusive end product or towards attaching data to a theory, as with GT. Furthermore, with a GT approach the researcher is open minded and has no preconceived ideas, apart from ‘knowledge of relevant social science literature' (Glaser and Strauss, 1995, p.146). In contrast, a GM approach the researcher may have an understanding of dyslexia, the way it is supported and managed within inclusion amongst a community and also may recognise the challenges and barriers that may exist with dyslexia in education. In this research GM was used towards a deductive logical approach at concentrating on the process of data collection, analysis, forming a hypothesis and testing this amongst participants who are in engaged and impacted by the way dyslexia is supported, managed within a community of practise. Importantly, using GM does not mean a conclusive substantial end point in the research process, nor a one-dimensional view point of the best way to support dyslexia, or a specific route to obtain inclusion for schools, but rather deductively leads to findings where further research can be developed, tested to develop an understanding of dyslexia, the way dyslexia is supported, challenges and the barriers preventing effective learning for those identified with dyslexia in education and beyond the UAE.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This review of literature and policy on dyslexia and SEN in education is included to provide the reader with an understanding of how dyslexia is defined in both national and international policy, and how teaching practice supports and manages dyslexia in and through education. The reason I chose dyslexia over any other SEN in this research is that dyslexia is one of the most common learning difficulties I often see within the schools in the UAE. Secondly, I have dyslexia, my son has dyslexia and I am also a teacher with over 15 years in the UAE, which provides me with different interesting perspectives within education.

2.1 Developments in Defining Dyslexia

The history of dyslexia dates back to 1877, when Adolf Kussmaul coined the term wortblindheit, meaning word-blindness, to describe how 'a complete text-blindness may exist, although the power of sight, the intellect and the powers of speech are intact' (Shaywitz, 2003). Subsequent research by Gerstman (1950's, cited in Miller and Hynd, 2004), which coined the term 'Gerstman syndrome' reflecting the commonly associated number of neurodevelopmental disorders and by the process of identifying neurological difficulties of dyslexia with the right/left corresponding difficulties with symbols, such as numbers and musical notation (Levinson, 1980). Critchley (1968) conducted further research, recognising that dyslexia is developmental and can manifest through difficulty in expressing ideas on paper (dysgraphia).

There are several core indicators of dyslexia, according to Reid (2013, p.2), which provide key evidence for identification. These include difficulties with reading, writing, spelling, and processing skills:

• "poor oral understanding
• difficulty decoding words contrasted with good comprehension
• problems with recognising and remembering sounds of words
• difficulties sequencing with the alphabet and spelling difficulties
• inconsistent writing style, slow writing speed, and difficulties and reluctance to engage in

longer pieces of work
• poor short-term and working memory
• poor long-term memory/organisational difficulties in displaying knowledge through written work and recalling sequence of events".
• "slow and delayed processing during reading" (Bosch-Bayard et al., 2018, p.19).
• difficulties with retention of even shortlists, instructions and rapid automatized naming (RAN) of large amounts of "visually presented stimuli" (Wolf, Bowers, and Biddle, 2000, p.322), "including sequencing of letters, colours, and digits" (Norton and Wolf, 2012, p.430-431).

Although there has been no general agreement with identifying dyslexia including identifying dyslexia through brain scans (Karande, et al., 2019) differences have been seen in the regions of the left hemisphere of the brain, which is involved with the processing of language (Goldberg and Schiffman, 1972; Hynd and Semrud-Clikeman, 1989). These brain differences have led to some researchers labelling dyslexia as a 'neurodevelopmental disorder' (Gonzalez, Karipidis, and Tijms, 2019). However, this does not mean that the brain is 'dysfunctional' or 'abnormal'; dyslexia is what happens when the brain is challenged when learning to read (Protopaps and Parrila, 2018).

Dyslexia, can also coexist and manifest as other specific learning differences when acquiring literacy-related skills, for example, numeracy (dyscalculia), motor coordination (dyspraxia), and sustaining attention (attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), (Kormos, 2017, Nijakowska, Tsagari, and Spanoudis, 2018). For example, it is estimated that 50–60% of those identified with ADHD have a learning difficulty, dyslexia being the most common (Olivardia, 2008), which may depend on the severity of different and shared networks of the cerebellar regions of the brain (Stoodley, 2014). Dyslexia also tends to run in families and is more common in boys than girls; there is a 50% chance that if a father has dyslexia, it will be passed on to a boy, with a lower percentage for girls (Snowling, 2011).

Historically there has been some difficulty and debate in the literature with clearly defining dyslexia, with a diverse range of research findings and research positions regarding the construction of dyslexia, and with increasingly complex and uncertain reactions towards diagnoses (Dunn, 1995; Gibbs and Elliott, 2015; Reid, 2006; Ryder and Norwich, 2018a).

Diverse meanings and uncertainty towards what dyslexia is can devalue what kind of support to provide. According to Burden (2002), this devaluation can lead to the perception of dyslexia as a 'convenience term' and even questioning whether dyslexia exist at all (Elliot and Grigorenko, 2014). The current definitions of dyslexia highlight these historical inconsistencies and this subsequently leads to difficulties with understanding what accommodations need to be made to support dyslexia. However, there has been a clear shift historically from the medical model of dyslexia and its belief that a learner's underachievement in education is due to some error or something broken inside the learner that needs to be fixed (Macht, 2017). In contrast, developing a social model of dyslexia is a shift towards seeing dyslexia rather than an individual problem it sees it as a wider social structural problem within cultures and the society in which it is placed (Macdonald, 2009, Riddick, 2001). I firmly believe, that the social model places the responsibility of removing barriers in education and society to reflect inclusion to all.

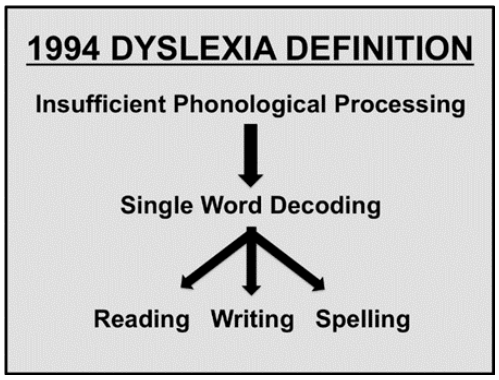
Dyslexia is defined by the British Dyslexia Association (2019) as a learning difference that primarily affects reading and writing skills. However, it does not only affect these skills. Dyslexia is about information processing. Dyslexic people may have difficulty processing and remembering information they see and hear, which can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills. Dyslexia can also impact other areas such as organisational skills. Whereas dyslexia is defined by the Orton-Gillingham Instruction (2019 paragraph 1, online) as a 'specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterised by difficulties with accurate/ or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected concerning other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge'.

On the other hand, The British Psychological Society (BPS) (Reason et al., 1999) defines dyslexia as being 'evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty'. In contrast, Made by Dyslexia (2019) states that dyslexia is 'genetic so runs in families' and has a different way of processing information which is caused by physical differences or 'wiring' of the brain'. Whilst, European Dyslexia

Association (EDA) (2019) defines dyslexia as 'three different disorders, a reading disorder, a spelling disorder, and a combined reading and spelling disorder'. The EDA also notes that environmental factors such as low socio-economic levels and living in a low-income family can determine the extent of impact and support. The problem for dyslexia support is not having an agreed definition and this reinforces the potential of reinforcing cycles of disadvantages towards unequal access to literacy tools for reading and writing within any curriculum.

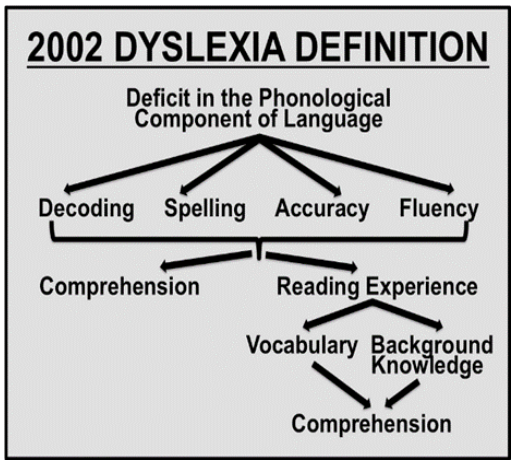
The complexity of developing an understanding and definition of dyslexia is illustrated by Dickman (2017, p.1), who points out the 1994 definition described the condition as 'insufficient phonological processing resulted in difficulty with single-word decoding that, in turn, caused difficulties in reading, writing and spelling'. Dickman (2017) illustrates historically how the definitions of dyslexia have evolved (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: **1994 Dyslexia Definition**



The 2002 (and current model), shown in Figure 2, according to the International Dyslexia Association (2019), recognises both the contextual impact of dyslexia and learning and the neurological deficit through the 'natural variation in brain function that predicts an unexpected difficulty learning a skill valued by the culture in which the individual is expected to perform, in this case, the ability to easily learn how to read'.

Figure 2: **2002 Dyslexia Definition**



2.2 Dyslexia and Education Policy

Defining and identifying dyslexia deficits is essential for diagnoses and subsequent effective support. However, designing an accurate assessment for the broad but specific set of deficits associated with dyslexia can ignore the continuum of other potential learning differences that may manifest alongside dyslexia. Conflicts and tensions of unpacking dyslexia are also noted by Elliott and Grigorenko (2014) who claim that 'the field has been unable to produce a universally accepted definition [of dyslexia] that is not imprecise, amorphous or difficult to operationalise' (p.5). However, for some, a clear definition is a starting point, and this has led to many organisations such as the parent-led grassroots movement Decoding Dyslexia (2019), which has expanded into all 50 states in America with a core value of advocating for 'a universal definition and understanding of 'dyslexia' in the state education code'. However, Lyon, who noted, probably the most significant and persistent problem in the field is the lack of a precise definition and a theoretically based classification system that would allow (1) the identification of different types of learning disabilities and (2) a means of recognizing distinctions and interrelationships between types of learning disabilities and other learning disorders (Lyon, 1996, pp.59–60). Although dyslexia cannot be clearly defined as one disorder for the purpose of clarity defining dyslexia in this research, I would agree that dyslexia is a specific language-based disorder (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2003; Reid, 2012).

Difficulties in diagnosing the range of potential effects of dyslexia can be unreliable due to the nature of the assessment (Cotton, Crewther, and Crewther, 2005). For example, providing

one adequate test that measures phonemic awareness, syntax, and semantic skills that can be accurately compared with age levels is a problem in terms of reliability and validity (Ellison and Semrud-Clikeman, 2007). Another important consideration when assessing deficits in learning is that assessments and screenings cannot identify the psychosocial consequences of dyslexia, including low-self-esteem, lack of motivation, and depression (Kalka and Lockiewicz, 2017; Yu, Zuk and Gaab, 2018), which impact mental health and learning in the present and further on in adulthood (Carawan, Nalavany, and Jenkins, 2014). Moreover, Nelson and Harwood (2011) 58 studies across school-aged children, with and without learning difficulties, including dyslexia, found those with learning difficulties with higher anxiety. Thus, developmental dyslexia can create an obstacle that impedes reading accuracy, diminishing the necessary motivation to learn and engage with schooling (Shaywitz, 1995).

Research has shown that there is no single, internationally accepted screening assessment tool for dyslexia (British Dyslexia Association (2019), International Dyslexia Association 2019). The number of people with dyslexia is not known conclusively. Reports range from 4% to 20% (Butterworth and Kovas, 2013; Shaywitz, 1996, 2005; Siegel, 2006; Snowling, 2010). According to the UK Department for Education (2016), an estimated 27.1% of primary students and 20.4% of secondary students are dyslexic. Knight (2018) suggests that teachers can have between one and five dyslexic students in each class. It is noteworthy, that although dyslexia is a complex phenomenon to define the numbers of those individuals identified with dyslexia are consistently high according to the literature, studies with the importance placed of early detection in SEN policies, yet little consideration has been placed on effective and culturally appropriate assessment tools that can identify dyslexia across languages. Moreover, although the debate may continue and be elusive over a clear and agreed definition for dyslexia this must not prevent attempts to identify with early screening to reduce challenges that prevent effective learning and the implementation for necessary needed support.

In the UAE, the National Policy to empower People of Determination (2019) is a policy that aims at providing rights of those with all disabilities towards 'an integrated community, free from barriers, which empowers people of determination and guarantees their right to a dignified life'. Although 'people of determination' includes those 'suffering with…physical, sensory, mental, communication, educational or psychological abilities', dyslexia is not specifically mentioned. People still must undergo a Ministry of Health & Prevention (2019)

committee decision on whether a dyslexia diagnosis report is eligible and legitimate for obtaining a health card for People with Determination in Abu Dhabi. Any policy that recognises marginalised in the UAE also needs to consider the many languages that this policy serves.

Dyslexia manifests and is not immune to any language, but differ across different languages (Everatt & Elbeheri, 2007). This can mean a challenge to those learners that are taught in English as the main language of instruction, as with the international schools in this research. However, in the UAE standard Arabic is the first official language and dyslexia may manifest through the unique orthography and phonemic correspondence of the letters with the component sounds of speech. These difficulties and deficits of phonological awareness impact reading and processing skills e.g., working memory (cognitively remembering information). Although there are different kinds of Arabic, standard Arabic is considered a key global language (Katzner, 2002) and a requirement stated by the UAE Ministry of Education (2019) for all non-native Arabic speakers to continue to learn Arabic until Year 10 (British and IB Years 1-13).

The differences between 28 Arabic letters in the alphabet compared to 28 to, with both consonants and long vowels have 34 phonemes, compared to 44 in English. Furthermore, English and Arabic share a reflective alphabet spelling system that has a standard set of letters with each letter representing a particular sound and a cursive joined-up writing style (Almaazmi 2013). Similarly, Dyslexia in both English and Arabic manifests itself with difficulties of phonological awareness and processing word sound relationships (Abu Rabia, Share & Mansour, 2003). However, early detection for dyslexia in English may be predicted easier than in Arabic, due to the nature and differences of Arabic orthography (Elbeheri, et al., 2015). These differences may be one significant cause of the high numbers of people estimated of having dyslexia, which gets often overlooked in Gulf countries, e.g., Kuwait 20% of the population (Kuwait Dyslexia Association, 2019). Understanding how dyslexia manifests in Arabic and English is essential for early detection, which leads to effective support.

Arabic writing is syllabic with sound-symbol association, almost one-to-one transparent in contrast to English (Azzam, 1989). As English is an opaque language, due to the complex

relationships between written and spoken forms of the words this becomes difficult to learn and a challenge for those learners with dyslexia. Whereas, Arabic has a complex and inconsistent orthography on a continuum between transparent and opaque as it can be written in two different orthographies e.g., Arabic in the non-vowelized script can be considered as having a deep orthography, due to the absence of orthographic markers for vowels (Saiegh-Haddad and Henkin-Roitfarb, 2014, Awadh et al., 2016). Languages with deep and complex orthographic differences between transparent and opaque languages make languages more or less difficult to learn, but also more challenging to those who have dyslexia with the varying relationships between graphemes and phonemes, which impacts the phonological process and awareness in reading.

Despite the potential need to diagnose early for dyslexia, there are inconsistent 'no specific pan-Arabic methods of identification or assessment developed for Arabic speakers' (Elbeheri, Mafoudhi, and Everatt, 2009). For example, research on cross-cultural comparisons between different types of spelling errors in languages and dyslexia can contribute and importantly add to our understanding of identifying dyslexia and the practical challenges towards inclusion and inclusive practices to support dyslexia in literacy (Tsakalaki, 2017). Dyslexia is not language-specific; however, it is an internationally recognised condition (Singleton, 1999). Dyslexia does have a language barrier, and depending on the ability to analyse syllables into phonemes, can be more of a problem in English, compared to other languages like Chinese and Japanese, where there is no requirement for phoneme analysis needed. One suspected reason from brain scans is that areas of the brain in these languages are used differently compared to those in English (Patterson, Marshall, and Coltheart, 2017).

With the myriad of languages and cultures represented in most international schools, it is essential that more effort towards researching and supporting learners with dyslexia who have to learn, speak, and are required to be tested in different languages. Importantly, many screening tools for assessing and identifying dyslexia have been developed to detect literacy difficulties in monolingual children and are not culturally sensitive (Verpalen et al., 2018). Without an awareness across languages of how dyslexia manifest itself in languages representative within the school then the inclusion and inclusive practices of support will always be suppressed. Ultimately, if there are any language and cultural underrepresentation, then the bias with screening dyslexia will potentially show invalid and unreliable diagnosis

results if the assessments tools used are monolingual.

Historically and internationally inclusion in education has broadly focused on issues of equity towards students who have been historically excluded (Taylor, Rooney-Kron, Whittenburg, Thoma, Avellone, & Seward, 2020). Inclusion in the literature (Thompson et al., 2018) and international policy e.g., Convention of the Rights of the Child. Article 23 (1993) in education has consistently recommended inclusion as best practice. These policies have addressed the exclusive element of a medical model of disability and inclusion e.g., trying to place a focus on the underlying cognitive impairments with phonological difficulties (Snowling 1998), rather than placing importance on a social model of inclusion with mediating effects on the educational environment, ineffective teaching methods, ineffective and exposure to literacy which challenges those learners with dyslexia (Riddick, 2011). Although, inclusion takes many forms depending on the individual and contexts and its effectiveness depends on how schools support and accommodate the needs of individuals they serve, particularly those students who need flexible approaches towards accommodation and support. For the purpose of this research, I agree with Kim et al, (2020) definition of inclusion in that inclusion benefits all children, including students with and without disabilities. However, despite the agreements, developments with inclusion in education policy the challenges of how schools accommodate different children with disabilities and manage inclusion is inconsistent and vary greatly internationally (Mitchell, 2001).

In Europe, it is estimated that 3–4% of people have dyslexia (European Dyslexia Association, 2019), whereas the British Psychological Society (1999) indicated that approximately 10% of the world's population have the condition (4% with severe dyslexia and 6% having mild to moderate difficulties). According to DECRR (2019), each class has two or three pupils with dyslexia, whereas, the Kuwait Dyslexia Association (2019) puts the figure as high as 20% of the population. Aboudan et al. (2011) conducted a study with UAE Emeriti female university students in one university and found that 17.6% of the students were undiagnosed dyslexics. One reason for dyslexia estimates being higher in the Arab world is that 'dyslexia is not recognised as a specific reading difficulty despite efforts by various Arabic educational authorities to raise awareness of learning difficulties and special educational needs throughout the region' (Elberheri, Mahfoudhi, and Everatt, 2009, p.10). However, for awareness towards dyslexia to be effective then accountability needs to be taken seriously

acted upon through educational policies and reform.

Providing a historical framework of international policy from the UK, USA, and the UAE can 'cast issues in a particular light and suggest possible ways to respond to these issues' (Campbell, 2005, pp.48–49) and analyse how policy is used by individuals and potential for organizational change (Gabriel and Woulfin, 2017). Understanding the construction of policy through those actors and communities served by the policy can actively seek how dyslexia is placed and used in the social world (Foucault, 1980). Understanding can also seek how policy becomes concrete, implemented, and used (Hyatt, 2005). Moreover, understanding what is reflective towards people's reality of these policies, or using a Nietzsche-led view of 'perspectivism', that all hold a certain perspective towards their own social belief of their world, can seek to understand how policy is intertwined, connected, conflicted and constructed around inclusion (Danermark et al., 2005). One of the difficulties in considering the collective viewpoints of inclusion as how to define/support dyslexia is to simplify it, which, as Booth (2017, p.5) notes, can 'collapse complex identities and experiences inside this single term'. However, for definition in this research, I would agree with Topping and Maloney (2005, p.1), who address special educational needs arising from inclusion as a dynamic process of recognising 'people and society valuing diversity and overcoming barriers'.

The debated definition of dyslexia is placed within and outside educational policy settings (Elliot and Grigorenko, 2014). Moreover, dyslexia research is confusing 'with many perspectives applying, and many discrepant findings and approaches' (Nicolson and Fawcett, 2010, p.149). However, education policy directed at supporting dyslexia and other learning differences has focused on bridging the philosophy of inclusion and inclusive practices within education. I will focus on recent legislation and policy in the UK, USA, and internationally with particular attention to consideration of dyslexia, which is also reflected in broader literacy and specific SEN policies. I believe that examining which policies shaped and defined SEN and dyslexia will provide a better understanding of changing perceptions of dyslexia as a medical label in policy and recognition of non-inclusion models of education, and the shift towards inclusion and inclusive practices of support both nationally and internationally. Placing dyslexia within a disability category constructs the discourses 'in which the medical ideology has become established due to its powerful position in the

hegemony of discourses' (Vlachou, 1997, p.18). However, the Warnock Report on Special Educational Needs (1978) illustrated the underlying problems of using the medical terms to define SEN and supported a shift away from using medical terms for diagnoses towards SEN. Yet, I believe that as dyslexia is hidden difference dyslexia needs to be positively labelled, so it gets the recognition and support it deserves. To ensure an effective transition towards an inclusive approach of support to work effectively then schools and systems need clear guidance, engagement, and accountability towards a sustainable continuous inclusive system.

SEN policy develops an understanding that requires the equal rights of individuals with SEN and their integration within traditional education systems. From this perspective, policies encourage and support inclusion and recognise historical differences of discrimination apart from those identified with disabilities (Booth, 2017). Policies to include children with SEN into regular mainstream classes are globally required to ensure inclusion. Although all policies agree in principle, the difficulties of obtaining practical steps and solutions are varied globally, which according to the World Health Organisation (2011) causes tensions on educational outcomes. Avoiding clear and practical objectives of how to support and ways for accountability towards inclusion can reinforce the cycles of exclusion for many disadvantaged in education.

Furthermore, inclusion policy and practice are used broadly in education (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2013) and (like dyslexia) lack clear definition. According to Lochmiller and Hedges (2017, p.18), rather than following one particular policy approach to address a solution towards supporting dyslexia, 'different methodological approaches have inherent value in a field as diverse as education policy and see the introduction of new methodological approaches as potentially beneficial'. National and international SEN policies share the same values and are on agreement with equal opportunities for all learners, but the system of education reflects inclusion and inclusive practises differently, which according to Crothers (2017) furthers inequality of education.

2.3 Inclusion and Inclusiveness in Education?

The term inclusion is a process in which educational systems provide support to diverse learners in a way that enables equal access to opportunities, respect for difference, and

enhances social justice (Robinson, 2017, Reid, 2012). Moreover, inclusion for many education systems in Europe and the United States has become a generic term directly associated with learners with special needs in education (Opertti, Walker, and Zhang, 2014). In the UK, the Warnock Report (1978) identified that an 'integrative' relationship between government and schools should be adopted regarding special education. Subsequently, the Warnock Report of 2005 conceptualized inclusion as not putting all children together within a curriculum, but rather 'including all children in the common educational enterprise of learning, wherever they learn best' (Warnock, 2005, p.14). The international policy of UNESCO (2017), with the support of 160 countries, developed a commitment towards a 2030 Framework for Action to address all forms of exclusion and inequalities, access, participation, and learning outcomes. This would be accomplished by ensuring teachers and 'educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated, and supported within well-resourced, efficient, and effectively governed systems' (UNESCO, 2017, p.8). Moreover, it is essential that supporting dyslexia should be part of all initial teacher training and not just placed in an SEN department.

However, the process of inclusion and the challenge of recognising diverse needs (especially the misguided beliefs of what constitutes dyslexia) can present considerable challenges for schools to be inclusive (Reid, 2012). For schools and society, a policy can be powerfully influential towards the needs for inclusion and become a transformational 'lever of change' (Ainscow, 2005) through changing attitudes towards inclusion, inclusive awareness, teacher training (Marimuthu and Cheong, 2014). Leadership needs to bring these transformative, collective changes and reforms against long-held beliefs together, which will not result in effective 'success if the leader does not display inner strength and courage' (Burnett, 2005, p.73). Moreover, schools with inclusive cultures are expected to have leaders who are committed to inclusive values and to leadership style which encourages a range of individuals to participate (Topping and Maloney, 2005). However, Clarke and Kohn (2002) found in their review of more than 100 studies that three essential elements necessary for reforming schools towards inclusion are restructuring, reorganising, and re-culturing. These values underpin the essence of policies on SEN and should central towards schools journeying towards being more inclusive.

Considering inclusion as an ethical system generates a willingness to change and avoids the

influence of dominant discourses that disrupt this process (Robinson, 2017). Moreover, the concepts and terms used to reference inclusive values and accommodations (and differentiated learning strategies) should be shared by all children, families, staff, and governors through continued processes within schools (Dovigo, 2017). McIntyre (2009) also proposes partnerships towards inclusive pedagogy with teachers, where student teachers can be involved in making relevant practical suggestions and debating working solutions. Rather than teaching is isolation this can be an opportunity to foster new creative ways to improve teaching.

The process of inclusion and inclusive teacher practice, as noted by Ainscow (2011), is to create an environment and conditions for collaborations amongst all members of a school community. The need for schools to reflect and embrace inclusion is that if education aims to be relevant, then education should 'introduce the necessary changes that permit it to adapt to societal needs' (OECD, 2014, p.20). However, inclusion and exclusion can express different beliefs, values, and perspectives in education systems and act as internal and external barriers for learners, especially with the term SEN, which serves as a convenient magnet or vehicle for all forms of discrimination (Booth, 2017; Miles and Singal, 2010). Schools should be held accountable for allowing teachers to research and be reflective towards their practice engage in how to improve support.

SEN policies may reinforce discrimination if the policy does not connect with reality in the setting in which they are served. Lloyd (2000, p.149) notes that for inclusion to be effective in schools, teachers must be reflective and to evaluate and develop their practice by 'engaging in collaborative, participatory, professionally based research that continuously challenges the underlying assumptions of policy and provision and practice'. A 'collaborative inquiry' advocates practitioner research by building relationships to understand and improve inclusive systems within education (Ainscow, 2005). Rose (1998, p.36) points out that time spent planning 'how the curriculum can be best be managed to meet the needs of pupils, rather than attempting to fit pupils to one pattern of curriculum delivery, is likely to yield benefits for all pupils'. Changes to traditional teaching practices and attitude changes towards inclusion can be a challenge for teachers and schools.

There are clear tensions and disagreements towards what inclusion should look like. Conflict

arises between attempting to reach 'full inclusion' when there are many obstacles towards accommodating the wide needs of students and the conflict of 'standards' and 'league tables' dictated from government and school inspections (Evans and Lunt, 2010; Barton, 1997). Moreover, Topping and Maloney (2005, p.4) points out that the promotion of 'community cohesion' should be developed by 'local councils outside schools to develop their collective base skills and "learning communities", to raise aspirations and build confidence and skills of local people'. This grounded approach addresses the importance of engagement with individuals, the community, and the inclusive needs of that inclusion serve.

Market forces and neoliberal views in education may reinforce the cycles of disadvantage that prevent inclusion. Fiske (1996) notes that decentralisation in education affects areas of quality and effectiveness in educational support and provision. Learning obstacles caused by a lack of funds and accountability create barriers to inclusion and inclusive practice. Dovigo (2017) points out that diagnoses and tests produce a 'standard' that is used for defining what is non-standard. A top-down approach based on policies can also prevent the individual needs of learners being sought and further reduces teachers' control and creativity in supporting learning (Ferri and Ashby, 2017). Studies by Ainscow et al. (2006) and Ainscow (1995) on inclusion explored the following keys issues:

- effective leadership
- involvement of school staff, students, and the community in the development of policies and the making decisions
- commitment to collaborative planning
- effective coordination strategies
- attention to the potential benefits of inquiry and reflection
- policy for staff development.

Agreeing what inclusion should look like is complex, as diversity and contextual issues are not the same, and often inclusion attracts the risk of oversimplification (Ainscow et al., 2006; Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou, 2011). However, Reid (2019, p.1) notes that the specific challenge of inclusion results from 'conflicts arising from traditional pedagogical perspectives, social attitudes, conventions, and perceptions'. Effective inclusion for those with learning difficulties draws on awareness and focuses more on the specific needs, specific contexts, and active engagement from all stakeholders. Moreover, according to Vlachou

(1997, p.12), this social process involves a 'series of parameters with education, political, moral, theoretical, and practical implications'.

Reid (2019) specifically highlights the factors that support successful inclusion, and particularly with dyslexia, including:

- a commitment by educational authorities and schools toward an inclusive ideal
- a realisation by the staff of the widely embracing features of inclusion and the equity issues inherent in these features
- awareness of the particular specific needs associated with children with dyslexia and accommodating these through a curriculum and teaching approaches
- acceptance that inclusion is more than integration and that it embraces social, cultural, and community equity issues as well as educational equality
- regard for the cultural differences in communities and families, and acknowledgment that children with dyslexia require flexible approaches in assessment and teaching
- honouring both the child's rights and individual differences.

Moving towards inclusion in education is a continual process of identifying needs, engagement, and taking responsibility for change. Ballard (1995) notes that providing necessary organisational arrangements in schools shifts the perspective towards inclusiveness as an experience to be addressed within the context of diversity. Identifying differences as a value rather than defining difference as a hindrance reduces exclusion. However, as with any system, there will be challenges towards the journey of inclusion. For example, Lunt and Norwich (1999, p.84) state that inclusion is not the only value in education. Another value is quality teaching that addresses individual needs, and by 'accepting multiple and contrary values in education, we need to resolve dilemmas by finding optimal balances and trade-offs'. Detection, diagnoses, and recognitions are three kinds of steps towards inclusion or inclusive practice, with the early detection becoming central towards support (Reid, 2013). If education place diversity as a core value within education then practical meaningful steps need to be taken not just within one school but supported within all parts of the society in which they are placed.

2.4 Labelling and Diagnosis

Diagnosis and early detection of dyslexia can assist parents and students in finding a starting point towards intervention, accommodation, and support. Macdonald and Deacon (2019) note that the process of identifying dyslexia should provide easy access for children, families, and adults to improve early intervention. Teachers who may have not been trained can be a problematic issue. A survey of 2,487 teachers in the UK found their understanding of dyslexia is based on narrow, behavioural-level descriptors (Knight, 2018). With this narrow view, it is not possible to achieve a clear diagnosis for many disabilities (Dovigo, 2017). The problems of assessment and diagnosis of children with special needs include 'possible stigma in special provisions; the efficacy of tests considered psychometrically and socially; the role of motivation; and the adequacy and propriety of legal intervention in diagnoses and placement' (Leong, 1985 p.60).

Finding a trustworthy assessor to diagnose dyslexia is a problem in certain parts of the world. For example, in the Middle East there 'is a tendency in parts of the regions to trust the credentials of a Western (typically English-speaking) assessor more than an Arab assessor' (Elbeheri, Mahfoudhi, and Everatt, 2015). Furthermore, there are no clear tools for assessing dyslexia in Arabic; consequently, dyslexia awareness and provisions in the curriculum (and in schools) across the Arab world vary considerably (Mahfoudhi, 2009). It is surprising that screening tools are not openly and mandatory used more often as part of the initial stages of literacy learning amongst schools.

Funding to support learners with learning difficulties is also a challenging issue in education. In the UAE, public and private schools are segregated under different educational authorities, there are no funding mechanisms, and parents are afraid to mention that their child has any learning differences. It is difficult to obtain placements, and identification and intervention are challenging (Ewen, 2015; Rose, 2009; DfE, 2011). Recognition starts with the process of assessing learning difficulties (including dyslexia) is very complex, and assessors and educational psychologists must select tools that are multifaceted, comprehensive, culturally and linguistically fair, valid, and useful (Nahari and Martines, 2008). The label of dyslexia is a starting point, not an end product, that provides the beginning of an investigation towards the difficulties and barriers preventing learning (Reid, 2013). The earlier detection takes place

any potential barriers can be removed and necessary accommodations are made before learners are faced with low confidence and a sense of failure within a system.

Being labelled dyslexic can also mean a child internalises the potential negative label of being different, placing them at a disadvantage, which can affect self-esteem and lead to being bullied and victimised (Taylor, Hume and Welsh, 2009). Frith's (1995) three-level framework model considers causal dyslexia are influenced and impacted by biological, cognitive, behavioural elements, and environmental, which also importantly needs to be considered when supporting dyslexia. Leong (1986, p.54) recommends that 'assessments of children with special needs should include cognitive, educational, motivational, and adjustment aspects'. Without a full understanding, this cycle of disadvantage produces negative connotations or further 'stigmatisation' in society (Riddick, 2000) and can develop and exacerbate other internal and external behavioural disorders (Egan and Perry, 1998; Perry, Perry &and Rasmussen, 1986). This can often continue into adulthood if not addressed (Livingston, Siegal, and Ribary, 2018).

Defining dyslexia in any educational system can be a start towards understanding and providing the necessary support. However, inclusion and inclusive practices need to be set up before in schools and society, as Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy 2017-2018 identifies as a problem, which may result in SEN learners being left behind and not being given equal opportunities to learn and progress. Schools need to be openly transparent about dyslexia, how they support dyslexia, and honest with the challenges they face with inclusion.

In the USA, 70% of schools do not describe dyslexia as a disability (Made by Dyslexia, 2019). Consequently, a lack of diagnosis and awareness within educational systems can ultimately lead to problems in society. Some studies have indicated that many prisoners have dyslexia. One study in Texas found that 80% of inmates in juvenile institutions exhibit the typical characteristics of dyslexia (Moody et al., 2000). Another study in Sweden and Norway found a higher frequency: 45 inmates interviewed, 28% had been identified with dyslexia (Lindgren et al., 2002). In 2013, the UK Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling) delivered an MP's 'Crime in Context' speech, which stated the percentage of young offenders who were dyslexic, 'A high proportion of them—may be

more than half—will have dyslexia (43%–57%). That compares with just 10% of the population as a whole'.

Ryder and Norwich (2018b) studied 164 lecturers in UK universities across 12 disciplines. They revealed that although lectures showed degrees of positivity towards dyslexia, and reasonable adjustments made were made, there were 'notable consequences including confusion and feelings of inadequacy around how best to meet the needs of dyslexic students, a resonance on reasonable generic adjustments, and disinclination to fully engage with related equity-issues knowledge'. Apart from the positive consequence of 'reasonable adjustments' to learning, other negative consequences occur with dyslexia, and these frustrations can lead to suffering and depression.

The unfortunate side effect of low self-esteem can lead to childhood depression and potential suicide (Lin et al., 2008). If developmental dyslexia remain unidentified and early intervention is not provided, some of the side effects of low-self-esteem and depression can act as 'emotional carnage' later in a child's life (Kline, 1978). Identifying dyslexia in the early stages not only assists with barriers preventing learning but also influences an individual's self-esteem and can affect the escalating problems stemming from developmental dyslexia in society.

Having a label of dyslexia in education can lead to misguided assumptions that only experts can deal with the issue and perception of teachers not 'possessing skills or training to deal with dyslexia in the classroom' (Reid, 2013). Moreover, labels can focus on and reinforce outcomes in education rather than the learning potential of individuals (Hessels, 1997). Diagnosing dyslexia and providing the most appropriate intervention and planning in schools is the primary aim for learners with dyslexia (Christo, Davis, and Brock, 2009). Besides, the SEN policy and the Education Act (1994) define dyslexia as an additional learning need (ALN). Placing dyslexia on a 'continuum of special needs' means that dyslexia and learning support are parts of a continuous approach towards accommodating needs across the curriculum (Riddick, 2003, p.223). For continuous support to be effective then teachers need to be receptive and reflective towards accommodating learners with dyslexia and ultimately this impacts the success of inclusion.

2.5 Teacher Attitudes Towards Dyslexia

Many teachers and educators display negative attitudes towards learning disabilities, viewing individuals as lazy, less intelligent, and more difficult to teach (Lisle and Wade, 2014). According to Topping and Maloney (2005, p.6), these beliefs will have a 'significant effect on the implementation of 'inclusion' within educational systems'. Teacher attitudes and relationships towards supporting dyslexia may stem from the link between experience and training.

A study conducted by Washburn, Binks-Cantrell, and Joshi (2013) surveyed 171 preservice teachers in the US and UK to investigate whether they held misconceptions about dyslexia. The authors found that teachers in both countries reported several misconceptions. Most notably, a majority of preservice teachers stated that dyslexia are caused by issues with visual perception. This is despite The National Teaching Standards framework in the US stating that teachers must 'have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs […] and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them' (Department for Education, 2011a, p.12). Liasidou (2015, p.58) points out that a top-down approach for change has a minimal effect unless three factors are considered for a teacher's 'theoretical, pedagogical, and ideological/ethical predispositions and preparedness to facilitate the process of change'.

Although SEN policy has identified that education should be inclusive and move towards inclusion (Rose, 2001), the pressure is placed on education systems that are demanding for learners who have SEN, rather than preparing and developing strategies for teachers to practice so that inclusion can be achieved (Ainscow, 1997; Robinson, 2017). Understanding SEN is one thing, but to implement effective support places pressures on teachers navigating a curriculum. Moreover, the shift towards an inclusive school is challenged if teachers do not willingly transition towards taking on the responsibilities under restrictive models of schools (Florian, 1998a, 1998b). Diluting dyslexia and awareness of supporting dyslexia can reinforce cycles of the same production of where knowledge is constructed and positioned to represent inclusive practice and inclusion support amongst teachers and schools.

To prevent conflict of attitudes and instead make a shift towards effective inclusion and inclusive practice, an awareness of dyslexia is essential for preparing new teachers. In the previously mentioned study by Washburn, Binks-Cantrell, and Joshi (2013), the results indicated severe misconceptions about dyslexia being defined as a visual issue or 'visual stress'. Gibbs and Elliot (2014) recognised that the label of dyslexia and being labelled as having 'reading difficulties' affected teachers' beliefs towards effective intervention, which correlated with their years of experience. A study of 304 teachers (with an average of 16.6 years of teaching experience) found both positive and negative attitudes and different teaching interventions towards learners with dyslexia (Stampoltzis, Tsitsou, and Papachristoppulos, 2018). Despite teachers being in an advantageous position in their classrooms, they feel reluctant and limited within their field of knowledge to be able to label someone as having dyslexia (Ross, 2017) and fear of expectations from staff, parents, and the learners themselves (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997).

2.6 Early Intervention

Early identification of dyslexia increases supports for both the academic and emotional wellbeing of learners with dyslexia (Merzenich et al., 1996), particularly with reading (Snowling, 1996). To ensure support for development, it is also important to get early and detection through an ongoing assessment process (Shaywitz, 2005; Snowling and Hulme, 1996; Schatschneider and Torgesen, 2004). With early diagnosis, an intervention can be put in place, which can lead to future academic, social, and positive emotional outcomes (Terras, Thompson, and Minnis, 2009).

One model for early identification is Response to Intervention (RTI), which aims to target evidence-based instruction before learners with SEN fall behind in learning and the curriculum. Further, it is hoped that by taking into account the areas of environment and culture, learners' academic performance will improve (Taylor, 2014). However, something seen as normal in one society can be perceived differently by another (Vlachou, 1997). Due to the extra support and targets set in an IEP, learners are often taken out of class to receive work with learning support or a SENCO. This could also result in a decision from an IEP whether support is necessary and what provision of support is achieved in the class with a teacher and outside with a specialist.

According to Morin (2019), there are marked differences between 'Push-In' services to support learners with SEN (including instructional support, which is differentiated instruction in class) and 'Pull-Out' services (which work with students outside the general education classroom, with small groups or one-on-one sessions in a separate setting supporting SEN). The main advantages and disadvantages noted by Morin (2019) are that Push-In classes provide fewer opportunities for any necessary instruction to assist with keeping up with the curriculum, and there may be more distractions in class. Pull-Out classes have fewer opportunities to collaborate and the instruction given may be less effective. Thus, according to Vlachou (1997, p.31), this generates a problem of 'splitting of relationships, roles, and responsibilities between two types of teachers special and ordinary'. This also challenges any teacher having SEN learners in their classroom to make the necessary judgments and accommodations between balancing accommodations and focusing on subject content (Rose, 1998). Accepting the idea of inclusion for teachers represents an opportunity to collaborate, participate and should be seen as part of teachers' professional practice towards being reflective and supportive (Florian, 1998).

Staub and Peck (1994, p.40) studied learners with special needs placed inclusively in mainstream education and found no detrimental evidence against teachers. Instead, the authors suggested that this 'is exactly the kind of experience in the lives of children, and the kind of reflective dialogue among adults, that is necessary to achieve change in the values and ethics underlying public education policy'. Blachucik (2018) studied 130 parents of students with various types and degrees of disability and found that an integrated system of education was better and more highly valued the opportunities provided for the development of cooperation and mutual help between students. Rather than looking at segregation or integration towards SEN, Topping and Maloney (2005) argue that there should be a greater focus on 'reintegration' towards adapting practices in mainstream education and not simply using inclusion as a buzzword in schools. The success of inclusion will predominately depend on how teachers adopt measures to ensure that all learners participate and engage effectively (Rose, 1998). However, guidance, clear objectives, and accountability are essential and these need to be documented through an IEP.

An IEP aims to provide grounds for the provision of services and a roadmap for parents and

teachers to document learning processes towards meeting objectives and goals (Lee-Tarver, 2006). An IEP also provides an inclusive tool within the classroom based on understanding and a more accurate picture of how students with SEN learn (Read, 1998). According to Rotter (2014), the IEP for SEN learners should be a collaborative effort and requires parents, teachers, administrators, and a multi-disciplinary team for successful implementation. From one perspective, it could also be a problem-solving task involving preparation, development, and implementation (McKellar, 2010; Rose, 2009). Involving and collaborating with parents can be a huge asset in a child's education. (Canney and Byrne, 2006). Saulius (2015, p.336) studied the perceptions of 170 parents of children with learning differences regarding parental involvement with teachers. The findings recommended tools to spread 'the exchange of information with parents' such as an electronic diary, a corresponding workbook, and telephone communication. Thomas, Walker, and Webb (1998, p.15) state that schools should adopt an inclusive community-based rather than a school-based approach that provides barrier-free access towards the implementation and management of support for SEN.

The importance of recognising dyslexia may change, and as with the IEP, this dialogue and collaborative effort need to be purposeful and regular (Cavendish & Connor, 2018). Social practice can be understood as a 'process of productive social activities' in which individuals are continually negotiating ways of participating in collective activities (Nicolini, et al. 2003, p.8). Using a sociocultural lens can emphasise demographic characteristics that are dependent upon the educational context and the quality of teaching and support through a curriculum (Mittler, 2000). Engagement is vital for effective support and accountability for all those involved in supporting dyslexia. A lack of engagement by teachers in developing an IEP may mean that they are ill-prepared to support students (Margolis and Truesdell, 1987). However, while an IEP can be a critical tool for guidance with teachers (Dudley-Marling, 1985), some teachers remain insufficiently trained to support inclusion policies and make them educationally useful (Bateman and Linden, 1998). Smith (1990) suggests that IEPs should be regularly reviewed and examined within the context of the current debate on special education reform, which would eventually enable the transition from 'islands of good practise' to 'larger islands' and implementation of widespread shared good practice (Topping and Maloney, 2005). Also, for the steps of inclusion to be sustainable and accountable, Stainback and Stainback (1990, p.14) advocate that inclusion in schools should incorporate a key task force of all stakeholders.

The ability to create an effective IEP that can be used understood and implemented throughout the school is debatable. A historical study conducted by Smith and Simpson (1989) examining 214 IEPs found that teachers reported writing these for reasons of compliance and that they were not worth the effort is still identified as a problem across schools Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy 2017-2018. Moreover, Powers et al. (2005) studied 399 IEPs and found that the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) was neither addressed nor adequately detailed. The paradox was that students frequently felt they were responsible for carrying out action steps to achieve their transition goals.

Removing learners from class for intervention and support is a contentious issue. This can reinforce the recognition of underperformance and be labelled with a disability. This means that the learner fails to receive effective, inclusive classroom-based differentiated instruction (Ferri and Ashby, 2017; Bean, 2004). Furthermore, Gelzheiser, Meyers, and Pruzek (1992) studied six schools with a focus on remedial instruction in regular class compared to pull-out models. They found no difference in reading achievement, apart from that when in class, there is a greater integration for learning.

However, children with dyslexia often become easily distracted in a regular classroom or maybe intimated when challenged with reading compared with their peers. The debate on whether models of inclusion can accommodate learners both working in and taken out of the class is debatable and sounds like a violation against an 'egalitarian ethic' in the context of inclusion and special needs (Vlachou, 1997). For example, Hegarty (1993) reviewed and summarised the OECD material on special needs education, suggesting that global research is unsuccessful in identifying conclusive, effective education programs, and attitudes to integration. Inclusion and inclusive practice need to be flexible and tailored towards SEN and consider the context of schools, the curriculum it serves, and the community that shapes this practice. Hegarty (1998) identifies that effective inclusive practice does not necessarily transfer into another context, but 'the principles that underlie good practice in one context, we acquire the possibility of embedding them in different practice in another context'. However, inclusive classrooms are not easy as they 'demand that every mainstream classroom teacher, who has no experience treating learning difficulties, finds a way to educate each student with

a learning difficulty' (Reid, 2013, p.101).

As noted by Teresa and Mason (2012, p.89), the choices faced by schools and families about educating a child with learning difficulties involve complex, iterative processes of negotiating, experiencing and making sense of the decision'. However, whether the student is placed inclusively or exclusively may depend on the 'multi-sensory learning, supported by technology and inclusive teaching practices' that need to be 'student-centered and the assessment process varied to accommodate student-centered styles and strengths and to ameliorate some of the barriers to effective and efficient study' (Waterfield, 2015, p.23).

Addressing the needs of students with dyslexia depends on the essential issues of funding and investment for training. There have been reports that dyslexia in schools is not being identified. According to an All-Party Parliamentary Group for Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Differences report in the UK (2019), UK schools are failing to diagnose at least 80% of dyslexic pupils, and the report states that although most schools are legally obliged to try and identify pupils with dyslexia, in reality, diagnosis is rarely an option for those who cannot afford to pay privately. Failing to diagnose dyslexia will impact the necessary support and accommodations to learning and the way dyslexia is managed in schools. This point is one of the central pillars of inequality and became central to my research.

It has been found that there is no central mechanism of funding for supporting learners with SEN in many countries. In India for example many schools do not offer remedial services for supporting dyslexia (Center for Equity Studies, 2014) and there are no Indian local words for and to define dyslexia (Gabel, 2004). A global report of how dyslexia is assessed in 195 countries found that practices towards identifying dyslexia varied considerably with some countries having access to comprehensive assessments and trained practitioners, with some countries none and even some countries developing their assessments for dyslexia (Mather, White, and Youman, 2020).

However, like Thomas, Walker, and Webb (1998, p.9) note, lowering inequality is about more than simply providing resources; 'it is about providing the chance to share in the commonwealth of the school and its culture'. The challenges (nationally and internationally) is supporting SEN targets and taking steps towards aligning practice and accommodate the

widening of inclusion, whilst at the same time improving the overall expansion of inclusion. Countries that use inclusion to reflect accommodating diversity in some schools 'have placed particular emphasis on developing clear targets, corresponding indicator frameworks and mechanisms to report on the system's use of resources to achieve these goals' (OECD, 2017, p.156).

Cost also becomes a barrier towards inclusion for some parents. In the UAE, an HSBC's Value of Education 2017 (Nunn and Grant, 2017) report found that UAE parents spend more than double the global average on private schooling costs. The challenges posed by deregulation of funding means that parents of children who have dyslexia have to seek diagnosis and support through private means (Macdonald and Deacon, 2019). However, even where countries do provide state funding for dyslexia, it does not mean that these laws are standard, regulated, and followed in the same way. One example of this is the US, where only 33 states have 'dyslexia laws' that include early screening and funding (Morin, 2019). Youman and Mather (2013, p.138) point out that in most US school districts, educators place students with dyslexia under the large umbrella of specific learning disorders, which lead to 'general intervention strategies and accommodations that may or may not fit the needs of students with dyslexia'. These laws not only challenge inclusion and inclusive potential but avoid the importance of providing parents with information about an early diagnosis (Elliott, 2018). As Vlachou (1997, p.27) notes, with funding SEN, 'economic interest always lies beyond discourses about resources and provision'. Many countries face the underpinning issues of establishing a 'shared understanding of educational quality that is suited to inform the planning of efficient resource' (OECD, 2017, p.157).

Ultimately, providing awareness of the prevalence of dyslexia internationally can lead to greater understanding, particularly in the Arab world, where 'academic research on this specific condition in their region is extremely scarce' (Aboudan et al., 2011). Research on methods to improve the symptoms associated with dyslexia has shown a positive effect on interventions for the dyslexic individual (Duff and Clarke, 2011; Savage and Carless, 2008; Snowling and Hulme, 2011).

2.7 Teacher Training

An effective IEP to support learning and teachers' pedagogical practice also needs to be shaped by those students who are served by that IEP. Teachers play a significant influencing role in achieving an outcome for learners and 'too often, teachers approach professional development like magpies; they pick and choose the bits that fit with their theories' (Hattie, Masters and Birch, 2015, p.20). However, training is a crucial element towards inclusive practice and providing tools to construct an inclusive environment (Dovigo, 2017). Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) have recognised that inclusive pedagogy is an approach towards maintaining academic accomplishment in diverse classes. To consider how educational practice can reflect inclusion, Reid (2013, p.29) notes that rather than ask 'what is the best approach for dyslexic children?' we should reflect on 'what are the barriers that prevent that child from learning?' or, put differently, 'the ability to learn highly depends on how knowledge is managed and using different techniques and tools can avoid some of the barriers to learners' (Dror, Makany and Kemp, 2010, p.17).

Recognising literacy difficulties, one of the early indicators of dyslexia, is not always easy. According to Christo, Davis, and Brock (2009), evidence of literacy responses over time can be achieved with assessments and an understanding of predictors (phonological, semantic, and synthetic) that the learner struggles with standard benchmarks. Subsequently, monitoring and setting a framework for required accommodations is necessary. Inclusive policies supporting dyslexia in education not only direct teacher training but also amplify the work of those teachers who themselves have dyslexia.

Teacher training and the steps towards a model of inclusion in education have both faced challenges (Reid, 2013). Historically teacher training inadequately addressed supporting SEN. Research conducted in 1996 suggested that despite the increasing contact that teachers had with pupils with SEN, this was not adequately addressed in initial teacher training (Garner, 1996). A study by Riddick (2003), with seven dyslexic teachers and five dyslexia trainee teachers, recognised that two of the trainee teachers did not declare their dyslexia for fear of discrimination. The other three trainees with dyslexia reported negative attitudes towards dyslexia in education. Discrimination toward teachers with dyslexia who perhaps would be suitable for supporting dyslexic learners' places teachers in a stigmatised position

in education and 'feeling their disability enhanced their teaching performance but might discredit them in the eyes of the wider educational establishment' (Riddick, 2001, p.233). Negative attitudes towards dyslexia have also been reported by teachers with dyslexia (Humphrey, 2001; Humphrey and Mullins, 2002), which highlights that the 2010 Equality Act is also relevant for teachers with dyslexia. Thus, the environment in which dyslexia is understood follows the social model of disability, which recognises dyslexia or disability cannot be fixed and identifies these attitudes lead to 'social divisions and inequalities' (Hannah, 2012, p.216).

It could be argued that dyslexia (seen as a disability) is formed by those negative attitudes that are perceived within society and the education system. Riddick, (2001, p.224) notes that 'impairments underlying dyslexia have only become a major difficulty because of the move towards mass literacy and the consequent negative connotations attached to being illiterate'. Thus, pressure on teachers from parents and from within the system concerning outcomes for learners who have dyslexia and are struggling can produce negative labels and affect confidence for all those involved.

Worthy et al. (2016) studied 32 public schools in Texas, US, and identified that the main barriers for dyslexic students were unworkable policies, unclear procedures of identification, limited information, and underfunding for the necessary support, all of which created unnecessary pressure. Necessary support identified in policies on dyslexia is not only about providing students with dyslexia-appropriate supporting tools in the classroom. It is also about seeing dyslexia as being connected to the learning barriers of 'socio-economic conditions, cultural and linguistic background, gender and, more generally, vulnerable situations to which everyone can be exposed during the many transitions the educational path requires' (Dovigo, 2017, p.37). When teaching foreign languages to learners with dyslexia, teachers are challenged and challenge each other to follow inclusive accommodation and practices towards individualised support and differentiated practices (Nijakowska, Tsagari, and Spanoudis, 2018).

Teachers who prepare an IEP for continuous intervention and necessary support are hindered if they do not have remedial training and support (Rotter, 2014). Moreover, teachers who use a standardised supporting approach and practice ('one approach fits all') may fall into what

Hayek (2012) describes as 'evolutionary rationalism' in which ideas survive because they seem to work, and their survival is their justification. In this sense, it is evident that education is perceived as part of the competitive marketplace (Vlachou, 1997).

Fixed and inflexible common curricula designed and perceived within the competitive marketplace impose problems for struggling learners with SEN. Zhao (2018, p.72) notes that education systems try to homogenise learners through high-stakes testing, and 'the more successful the education system is at homogenising, the higher test scores it achieves, and, at the same time, the more effective it is at eliminating diversity'. Zhao (2018) states that this is why culturally Asian countries, specifically China, focus more on the values underpinning test-driven results and less on creativity. Zhao (2018, p.72) states that under systems of education that focus on test results, creativity is suppressed. This 'is why Steve Jobs would not have become Steve Jobs had he been born in China'. Systems of education and values of curricula put learners with dyslexia at a disadvantage by focusing on teaching to the test, taking high-stake tests, and providing fewer choices that nurture individual aptitude and creativity, with insufficient vocational choices available. Historically, it could be argued that 'education is a form of social control, designed to fit children into a limited number of life slots and as universal educations spread, it did not respond to children's situations' (Hegarty, Pocklington, and Lucas, 1981, p.37).

Inclusion in education, as Slee (2013, p.9) notes, presents challenges to schools that have long sought to homogenise the student's body, who 'are reduced to the bearers of results' and undermines the values of difference that underpin those values of SEN policy, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Inclusion is about social justice and 'not simply about equality of access to schooling, but also equality of circumstance, participation, and outcomes' (Campbell, 2002, p.12).

International teachers with different experiences, knowledge of the policy of inclusion and inclusive practice may have different reasons regarding what works and does not work when it comes to intervention and inclusion. If the policy is not understood and is not actively transformative towards support, then there is an injustice in the inadequacy of our explanation (Weil, 2005, p.72). For example, it has been reported in India that even with inclusion policy (National Council for Teacher Education) teachers had not made changes to their practice

(Sharma, 2002). Inconsistencies and the amount of support for dyslexia in education are different both within one country, the USA, (Youman and Mather, 2013) and globally the quality and availability of assessments for dyslexia vary greatly (Mather, White, and Youman, 2020). Moreover, teachers following essentially the same curriculum without any accommodation become what Freire (1972) refers to as trapped within the 'pedagogy of the oppressed' and shackled to an education system/ curriculum that follows the cycles of disadvantage, using the same teaching practice of a 'one model fits all' approach to supporting dyslexia and SEN. Thus, teachers need to have a shared opportunity to progress and foster the necessary skills and training required to become more inclusive (Burnett, 2005).

A more flexible and open view towards how to support learners within an inclusion framework is offered by Wearmouth, Soler, and Reid (2002). They identify that common factors with dyslexia should not dictate pedagogical approaches, but rather, teachers should ask questions about what barriers are preventing a child from learning. The responsibility and success of inclusion can depend (and be measured) by those actors and stakeholders who choose to continuously engage in a particular policy within a school and the community. Only by working together in schools for inclusion, and by adapting curricula and attitudes towards learners with SEN, can social and academic outcomes for all learners be changed (Florian, 1998).

An African proverb states that while it may take a village to raise a child, not all villages are culturally the same and place importance on the same policy. However, the contextual elements of raising a child in a global village (Fuchs, 2017) mean that inclusion is vital, particularly with children spending longer in education and children have to deal with the turbulence of moving within international education. Topping and Maloney (2005, p 5) also state 'if it takes a whole village to raise a child, it is likely to take a bundle of resources to raise a child with special challenges if the community and family have disintegrated'. According to Johnson (2012), educational turbulence emerges and interplays when macro (federal and state) and micro (district and local) affect accountability, curriculum and instruction, personnel, scheduling, learning environment, and community engagement.

Beabout (2012) argues that whereas turbulence in education emphasises the impact of structural/environmental policy, the term 'perturbance' can be defined as an active social

process of examining goals, policies, and practices. This can be a sustainable, educational change. Fostering and building collaborative cultures can reduce impact and gain sustainable support for learners who experience both turbulence and perturbance from both local and global experiences in education (Hargreaves, 1993) while actively and continually seeking barriers that prevent effective learning. Further, limited awareness and training in (and knowledge of) dyslexia and support will lead to a narrow range of practice (Stothard, Woods, and Innoue, 2018).

2.8 Promoting Engagement

From the perspective of social-cultural theory, the view of Vygotsky (1978) is that children's cognitive development is shaped by the socio-cultural context of the school and the interactions they have in schools. Dyslexia is supported and implemented by the engagement of social interaction of children, parents, and all those who provide support. Promoting teaching strategies to support learning can have a direct effect on cognitive development and learning; thus, learning with dyslexia becomes more meaningful and transformative mediation, as this approach offers the role of internalisation of insight and reflection of learning and working through existing learning barriers (Weinstein and Saul, 2005).

Furthermore, engagement in meaningful dialogues that leads learners with dyslexia to self-reflect on their own experiences of dyslexia and of others can lead to a liberation towards learning, as emphasised in Freire's (1972) work. Kincanon (2009) notes that the approaches towards dialogue should include cultural as well as personal experiences, which places the experience of dyslexia within an international context that is vital when considering different previous experiences of support and perspectives. Using Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development, teacher instruction and support through guidance can provide learners with dyslexia a way of developing key skills and strategies that they could potentially develop to use on their own. This would help to develop higher cognitive functions. Blackman (2011) found that teachers and students with dyslexia engaging together on learning strategies promoted effective support. This included using steps, asking questions, offering an effective explanation, and giving pointers on classroom tasks.

For support to be inclusive and inclusion to be effective in managing dyslexia, all

stakeholders need to be actively and continuously involved. Drawing on experiences and knowledge of what support is needed and what works inside and outside the class can develop awareness and understanding about dyslexia and support amongst all the actors and stakeholders involved. John Dewey (1938), in Experience and Education, also underlined the importance with which previous experience and prior knowledge benefit continual interaction and assist in both development and new understanding. Exploring the obstacles and barriers that exist with dyslexia and learning through lived experiences of a community of people who are affected can assist with inclusion, policy change, and reviewing professional practices (Macdonald and Deacon, 2015; Shakespeare, 2013).

The UAE has two governmental branches that are responsible for overlooking education ADEC (Abu Dhabi), KHDA (Dubai) UAE Ministry of Education. However, schools that follow British curricula for example in the whole of the UAE and make up 49.5% of the 'prevalent foreign curriculum' (ISO, 2018-2019) can be accredited with one, more, or none of the following COBIS (the Council of British International Schools), BSO (Association of British Schools Overseas). Other examples of accreditations with other curricula used in the UAE include Indian school accreditation CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education). With different accreditations, there are different ways that schools operate and how they manage support, particularly in the UAE, which was number two of the having the most international schools by country globally, with the most enrolment of students of the top eight countries with international schools (ISO, 2017).

How and to what extent are parents challenged by navigating different accredited systems when identifying effective support for dyslexia in and across international schools? Through literature and research, my thesis places itself amongst other studies in recognising and identifying how far countries and international schools are journeying towards inclusion and what are the obstacles that exist. A global study in 2017 by (ISC and next frontier inclusion 2017) research of 415 international schools surveyed inclusion found 45.78% of schools felt that they were on their way towards reaching inclusion. However, only 8 schools were represented in the Middle East and with the high growth of international schools in the UAE, this research is underrepresented.

Dyslexia is a complex phenomenon, consisting of many factors that include phonological

factors (Reid, 2006; Seigal, 1992 Snowling, 1995) working memory, (Baddeley, 1993; Berninger et al., 2008; Jeffries and Everatt, 2004) working memory, and phonological awareness (Jefferies and Everatt, 2004), processing speed and motor coordination difficulties (Stoodley and Stein, 2011), visual processing and language processing (Everatt, Bradshaw and Hibbard, 1999; Cestnick and Colheart, 1999), and auditory processing disorder—being able to hear sounds, but the brain interprets them differently to the way they are said (Schulte-Korne et al., 1998). Multiple meanings associated with dyslexia relating to learning and language lead to challenges when considering accurate diagnoses and effective support (Stowe, 2000).

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the literature has raised issues of inequality in education due to the inconsistencies and the complexities of defining and providing necessary support for dyslexia. One key area stemming from providing support in identifying dyslexia and obtaining a diagnosis for dyslexia from trained assessors and teachers. How do schools identify, support, and manage dyslexia?

SEN policies and school values that underline and shape a collective viewpoint towards equality and inclusion for all in education are similarly shared amongst most schools. However, the process of inclusion and inclusive practices in education is dynamic and not standard, which can prevent effective support for learners overcoming barriers in education. The debate of defining dyslexia may act as a barrier towards standardised approaches particularly when placing the medical label on dyslexia and in policy, with support reduced to a convenient term of a one size fits all approach. However, what is evident also from the literature is that although values of inclusion are reflected in school policy and school values, schools are varied in their approaches towards inclusion and inclusive practices. If schools share values of inclusion and inclusive practices do schools also share a community of practice for support and the way dyslexia is identified and managed? What do schools do inside their schools to support and manage inclusion, inclusive practices, and support and manage dyslexia? What obstacles prevent inclusion and inclusive practices within schools? Is inclusion, inclusive practice, and support for dyslexia the same across the school? Does the support change alongside the changes from developmental dyslexia and how are these

changes reflected in an IEP (Individualized Education Program) across the school?

Literature highlights significant numbers of the world's population being identified as having dyslexia (European Dyslexia Association, 2019, British Psychological Society 1999). Teachers become instrumental and responsible front-line supporters of removing barriers towards learning and inclusion. It is evident from studies reflected in the literature that teacher attitudes and experiences shape the necessary and effective support for dyslexia across the curriculum (Topping and Maloney 2005). Teachers' perceptions of dyslexia are shaped by support with training and understanding SEN and this is key to avoid misconceptions (Washburn, Binks-Cantrell, and Joshi 2013). What do international schools do to provide teachers with the necessary understanding, training in identifying, particularly with early detection for dyslexia? What resources do schools use to support dyslexia and how are resources differentiated for learners identified with dyslexia? Is there a community of practice within and across schools with training for teachers who can identify dyslexia and experienced teachers supporting dyslexia? How do schools fund support for dyslexia and training for teachers to detect, measure progress, and provide necessary accommodations?

Contrasting differences on how support is perceived and given by schools amongst teachers and parents of children identified with dyslexia and varied parental engagement within schools also emerged in the literature. How involved are parents with understanding dyslexia, the process of identifying dyslexia, and support for dyslexia within and outside schools? Are parents involved with the development of IEP's in and across the school's curriculum? What barriers and obstacles towards learning and inclusion are reported by the stakeholders and those involved with supporting dyslexia?

The questions raised and the gaps of knowledge in literature towards understanding and supporting dyslexia underlines the importance of my research and adds to furthering the field of knowledge towards helping people, parents, teachers, and schools particularly in the UAE who have been identified as having children with dyslexia and those who support dyslexia in education. Furthermore, identifying how dyslexia is supported and managed within the literature in education and SEN policies places dyslexia firmly within the inclusion and inclusive debate in international education and in particular in the UAE.

The intentions of this thesis also add to the field of knowledge by illuminating how dyslexia is perceived, defined, supported, and managed in schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and how the community of practice is reflected by those members, principals, SENCO/SEN teachers and parents of dyslexic children towards inclusion and inclusive practice. The accumulation of knowledge gained from the literature also led me to identify the gaps of information including varied views of understanding, defining, and managing dyslexia internationally amongst schools. Furthermore, the comparative values underlying SEN policy amongst countries and the inconsistent ways these inclusive values are shaped in education. For example, there are differences with opportunities for being assessed for dyslexia, inconsistencies with how schools fund resources and provide the effective and necessary support. Additionally, it was also apparent in the studies that there is various conflicting information on how international schools and the international community engage with all stakeholders including teachers, other schools, parents, and learners on accountability and includes practical steps for supporting dyslexia.

Accordingly, it is essential to provide research questions based on the gaps and conflicting knowledge identified from the literature and the methodological approach towards obtaining more underrepresented views on inclusion, inclusive practices, and dyslexia support. This thesis then will proceed with the following research questions:

1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
1a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?
2. How can an effective community of practice be established in Abu Dhabi to support learners with dyslexia?
2a. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses?
3. To what degree are these principles, support, and provisions recognised as similar by parents and children and professionals working within a community of practice?
3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know

learning targets and objects are being met?

Chapter Three

Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the epistemological, methodological, and procedural aspects of this thesis, to provide my research design. This will increase the reliability of my findings, which are discussed in a subsequent chapter. The first section of this chapter explains how my research design is located in GM and the deductive approach of formulating hypotheses based on literature, observations and proceeding with the process of collecting, coding and data analysis to test my hypothesis. I also draw on critical realism (CR), with the epistemology of how the data was influenced by social constructivism and social constructionism. The purpose of using a CR lens is to separate and engage with the challenging nature of an understanding of dyslexia and inclusion, in light of policies in place for the actors involved. The participatory approach used in this research was through studying literature, policies on SEN, interviewing, and taking field notes with the aim of engaging with communities who support dyslexia at school and at home.

CR was used in this research through the use of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding stages observations along with the empirical, actual, and real experiences of how dyslexia is supported through the participants. I will also clarify why the decision was made to use GM as an approach to provide answers to my research questions. The second section of the chapter presents my qualitative approach to gathering data and is followed by a detailed explanation of GM, together with my analytical method. Table 1 shows how my study design, including my research questions, with the themes, coding stages, and how CR was used.

Table 1. **Summary of Study Design**

Open Coding
Research Questions: 1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

Sources of data:

School inspection reports, school websites, literature and SEN policies on dyslexia

Critical Realism ontology: Empirical (observed dyslexia provision in literature and policies)

Actual (Policy and actual values represented in school inspection reports and school websites)

Memoing started: Difficulties with defining dyslexia, challenges for inclusion and dyslexia awareness.

Axial Coding

Research Questions:

1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

1a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?

2. How can an effective community of practice be established in Abu Dhabi to support learners with dyslexia?

2a. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses?

Sources of data:

Interviews with school principals & SENCO's/SEN teacher (Abu Dhabi)

School 1: British Curriculum

School 2: International Baccalaureate School 3: Indian Curriculum

School 4: UAE Mixed Curriculum

School 5: American Curriculum

Critical Realism ontology: Empirical (are participants reports similarly/different to what school inspection reports and school websites state).

Observed SEN departments for materials to support dyslexia)

Actual (Do what participants report the same and how is support seen in SEN departments)

Fieldnotes: Notes taking in School SEN departments

Selective Coding
Hypothesis to test **Research Questions:** 2a. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses? 3. To what degree are these principles, support, and provisions recognised as similar by parents and children and professionals working within a community of practice? 3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know learning targets and objects are being met?
Sources of data: Interviews Parents interviews from Dubai **Sources of data from:** Ten parents with children identified as having dyslexia, including one parent and daughter with dyslexia. The selection of the volunteer participants involved was on a first-come basis and selected based on the similar curriculum reflected in the schools in Abu Dhabi (phase one).
Critical Realism ontology: Actual and real experiences from parents' perception and experiences with dyslexia in the community, dyslexia support at schools

Using CR in this research seeks to not necessarily question an ontological position of whether dyslexia support exists or is a 'reality' in education, but to identify how this support is filtered, reflected, defined, and managed. Further, it questions what is characteristic of this support in practice, and what do people with different positions in schools (such as teachers and principals) and parents do? Simply put, although schools may have a policy in place for support, this does not necessarily mean that the policy communicates and resonates the same through schools. How much freedom of support do the actors possess and choose and to what degree school policy on SEN/inclusion constrains these choices?

Following Bhaskar's view of the social world with critical realism can start to support GM by unpacking the mechanisms and the levels of support given to dyslexia. CR then may perceive

the reality of support for dyslexia as a complex set of overlapping ideas or perspectives that act as an interacting whole. For example, Bhaskar's (1997, p.56) ontological view makes a distinction between 'empirical, actual, and real'. Dyslexia support can be observed through field notes, while 'actual' may be viewed from the perspectives of what/ how support is given by participants, whereas the 'real' may reveal the reality by comparing or testing a hypothesis of both actual occurrences and observations. Does the observed support from field notes and websites on support in schools reflect actual SEN teachers reported support and the reality of what parents view as support? Do students have to be separated and experience dyslexia support or can support be part of differentiation in mainstream teaching practice? Or as Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014, p.220) note 'reality does not have to be experienced by everyone for it to have ontological substance'.

Using GM can also help indirectly (through field notes and observations and directly by interviews) to seek the mechanisms and power of hidden but transparent dimensions that are applied in understanding dyslexia and differential support, which exist independently from the policy. Crucially, by using GM in this study, I wanted to avoid any ontological and epistemological assumptions that would implicate my position in this study; instead, the aim was to obtain meaning through the driving process of comparing/contrasting experiences of others and attempting to 'interpret other people's interpretations' (Danermark et al., 2005, p.32).

3.2 Social Constructivism and Critical Realism

Social constructivism refers to identifying viewpoints of different social, or thought, collectives that would hold different and possible mutually 'incommensurable' views of the world (Bunge, 1992, p.215). Data can also be interpreted through a constructivist lens in terms of how participants in this research view and interpret the social world or, for example, how is dyslexia understood and to what degree SEN policies are used in schools/communities in the UAE. However, CR can complement GM in that an international policy (for example on SEN) can be seen as real while being actively used differently, such that the policy can be interpreted, organised, supported, managed, and influenced depending on the climate, culture and education system within which the policy is located and used. Thus, CR can recognise the complexity and multi-layered objectivity and subjectivity of a phenomenon and identify

certain general power mechanisms recurring under different settings and by different people. Critical realism is not a theory but, like GT and GM, is a research approach. It contributes 'both to clarifying the "what" questions and to some initial strategies for trying to answer the "why" questions, not in any final sense but in helping to build up an exploratory knowledge that purports to deal with the real' (Archer et al., 1998, p.12).

Using a CR framework can offer a way to explore what Bhaskar (2008) refers to as intransitivity and transitive dimensions. According to Bhaskar, intransitivity (from a critical realist approach) consists of the relationship of knowledge that is non-changing (such as real events, structures, and mechanisms) and processes of the natural world, which are real. This study becomes part of the critical realist paradigm in that it addresses the macro contexts of SEN policy, both internationally and locally and how the interpretation of policies is used in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. By understanding power through this study, hidden and destabilising aspects of how dyslexia is perceived and how support is given within school are investigated.

Further, the study undertakes a cultural and ideological investigation of the underlying power structures of intransitive knowledge for minority groups in education (using dyslexic students as an example) by exploring support the contributions from the principals and SENCOs of schools and parents. The transitive dimension of Bhaskar's (2008) theory can be seen in the way that knowledge is now commonly viewed and acted out through existing social practices. As an example of transitive knowledge, the relationship of the school policy on SEN, dyslexia support, and social structures in a community of practice are explored. Further, the study examines how this community exists and is independent of our knowledge and understanding of them, or, as Bhaskar (2008, p.16) notes, discovering 'the creative-praxis-driven process of production of scientific knowledge or the epistemological process'. By drawing on theories of GT and CR, this GM study aims to explore intransitive and transitive dimensions and to provide a better understanding of knowledge of dyslexia support and a community of practice.

Through GM and CR, this research can provide opportunities to examine inclusive education and inclusion, as well as identify certain general recurring power mechanisms, such as the continuous cycle of inequalities in education. Whereas GT aim is to reach theoretical saturation, using GM was used not only to provide information directly to answer my

research questions but not to claim that no additional data can be found for the way dyslexia support and managed, as the sample of schools may not be typical of all schools. Critically, the subjectivity of views and how an educational system can best offer education to all the people will be questioned. I believe that this research is placed within the scope of Paulo Freire's participatory action research (Freire, 1972, p.64). This is because education research aims to be a socially transformative process where 'people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation'. A flexible and socially engaged approach towards supporting dyslexia may avoid a shackled approach of pedagogy that supports and oppresses effective support. On a personal note, as having dyslexia myself and a teacher, parent of a son who has been identified with dyslexia the socially transformative process of how dyslexia develop is transformative to my understanding towards supporting him through education. Therefore, this research is aimed at holding up a mirror to show how dyslexia is defined and managed in schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The data becomes part of the process of reflection and sheds critical light on transformative opportunities for a continual community of practice towards inclusion and inclusive improvement.

3.3 Research Philosophy, Methodology and Methods

The previous chapters emphasised how the two key approaches of GM and CR are related to this research. This study followed an epistemological basis known as GM, which follows the premise of constructionism or social constructionism. First, the purpose of this research was to establish how principals, SENCOs, and teachers support students with dyslexia. Second, it was necessary to establish how a community of practice could be supported and developed in schools and Abu Dhabi. A hypothesis could be formulated using field notes, and then research questions for parents in similar schools in Dubai were formed by using Dubai school inspection reports (KHDA, 2019) to identify a similar curriculum to those schools in Abu Dhabi. Both Abu Dhabi and Dubai can be comparable as although both have different education ministries (Dubai, KHDA and Abu Dhabi, ADEK) they follow the same Federal Law No.29 of 2006 Special Educational Needs (SEN) and both share the vision of making all schools fully inclusive (Dubai 2021, Abu Dhabi, 2024).

GM follows a qualitative method to generate and gather data about the human socio-cultural experience (Charmaz, 2006) as opposed to from which theory is developed (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 2015; Glaser and Strauss, 1995). Grounded theories are inductively 'grounded in the data' rather than being deductively generated, thus scaffolding theories onto research results or data. GM is a deductive iterative process, where researchers continuously collect and analyse data (Charmaz, 2006) towards forming research questions. The deductive GM process of early open coding-axial coding and selective coding of data from interviews (first with school principals), continuously comparing and contrasting data, and then theoretical sampling from interviews with the school SENCOs and teachers led to 'theoretical saturation', where no new ideas, categories or concepts emerged.

The main reason for using GM in this research was because there was no current, single theory that generates a framework for research on international schools together with a community of practice in Abu Dhabi concerning supporting and managing dyslexia. GM follows a deductive approach towards developing a hypothesis from the continuous process of gathering, coding, and theoretical sampling of the actors (principals/SENCOs) involved in schools and the community of practice involved with dyslexia support and management. Using GM in this research describes a phenomenon in terms of the community of practice and the way it is managed and supported within international schools in Abu Dhabi field notes and governmental school inspection reports. Understanding how dyslexia is managed and supported within the community of practice from different viewpoints generates combined theories. Moreover, potential considerations of how dyslexia is perceived and managed yield implications for future research towards an inclusive, effective community of practice for dyslexia support.

3.4 Explaining and defining constructivism

My understanding of this perspective has been formed by Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994), who explains that in a system, the actors reproduce or alter systems through their actions, and the very structures become dependent on the practices of these actors for their reproduction. Comparing and contrasting practices and meanings using GM and CR, this study will explore how these are reproduced individually and in a community of practice, which can shape the rules and norms of these practices. However, different epistemologies are interchangeable

when comparing ontologies. Constructivism emphases how knowledge is constructed based on individual action and interaction alone or with others, whereas constructionism draws on the ideas formed from the social group, relationships, and the context or setting where the activity is placed (Crotty, 1998; Neimeyer and Carlos, 2015; Hyde, 2015).

Social constructionism forms the epistemological view of this study in two ways. First, the main purpose of this thesis is to explore the definitions and experiences of dyslexia and support, which reflect the collective pedagogies and practices of support, subsequently reflecting student knowledge outcomes. Social constructionism becomes an instrument to measure the epistemology and positive and negative values of dyslexia underpinning my research questions. These influences can dictate the mechanisms and structures of support, and with whom and how support and practice are identified and managed in schools.

Second, the social aspect of constructionism provides a lens through which the collective body of knowledge is supported and managed within a community of practice both in and between schools. This is achieved using the frameworks of the UAE national policies and international SEN policies on education. Collective views on using the same support for all SEN learners are problematic and complex due to the often-overlapping learning differences of SEN learners being placed on a continuous SEN spectrum. The benefits of the hegemony of dyslexia and support is that such labels often provide meaningful interpretations and practices for teachers (Elliot and Grigorenko, 2014). This 'social ontology' is a place where collective relationships and actions of social groups exist and intentions are produced to maintain an ontological status (Detal, 2015).

If schools adopt a knowledge-based policy where 'knowledge is now recognised as the driver of productivity and economic growth' (OCED, 1996), the focus on 'economising' with the choice of curricula with inclusion and inclusive opportunities can interrupt contextual hierarchies in schools (Muller, 2004). My research uses a deductive approach, Bernstein identifies 'codes', structures that regulate and are obtained deductively into a culture. Our relationships between the discourse of inner worlds (understanding) and the outer world (context bond) meanings become context-specific can be tested by hypotheses. In Open Schools, Open Society?, Bernstein (2003) suggested the curriculum is context-bound and can only be understood within the society in which it is placed. Further, in On the Classification

and Framing of Educational Knowledge, Bernstein (1971) identified that curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation are bound by structures of hierarchy, with pedagogy through subjects placed on a spectrum of importance becomes classified and segregated; not neutral. For certain supporting conditions to be effective in schools and society, schools and stakeholders need to develop and foster democratic processes in agreement with Bernstein's theory (1996).

Similarly, using the lens of Bourdieu (1986, 1991) can also assist with identifying connections between curriculum, pedagogy, and the cycles of inequalities with dyslexia support and inclusion in schools. Further, this view on dyslexia may reveal structures or cycles of inequalities on how dyslexia is defined and how a 'field' of the quality of support and accommodation is approached. Furthermore, this is supported through the breadth of pedagogy and curriculum, while the habitus of economic integration translates into what a parent can afford and how schools generate SEN costs. One example of how this can be examined is through inclusion and the accommodations of learning support, by considering whether these rights exist, whether conditions are met and whether these practices are available to all learners or only to some.

However, the way dyslexia is managed and supported internationally remains inconsistent (Reid, 2013). To make sense of this, and to understand and resolve this issue, my research adheres to the belief that research is conducted within the community being considered, and this underpins my research questions. According to Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014), researching with participants in the community to gain a critical insight does not take place in isolation, but rather through a socio-cultural process. Besides, the context and culture of a school may vary in terms of how dyslexia is identified and managed as it is not confined to any one language group, and while there may be some variation in the way it is expressed, while due to differences in spelling within languages, the problems and conditions are the same (Hoien and Lundberg, 2000).

Within my professional practice, I have been made aware of the complexities and constructions of dyslexia and its different definitions (Reid, 2013; Stowe, 2000). A plethora of definitions are based on symptoms rather than causes (Roderick and Fawcett, 2010), which has even led to some questioning whether dyslexia exists at all (Elliot and Grigorenko, 2014).

The purpose of my research is to explore the complexity of definitions surrounding dyslexia and challenge the way that terms such as inclusion and inclusive are used, supported, and managed within the framework of a community of practice.

Many research designs have explored the perceptions of dyslexia. These include interviews (Kormos and Kontra, 2008), questionnaires to investigate how teachers assess students with dyslexia and their choice of support strategies (Blagovesta, 2015), and a narrative synthesis (Pino and Mortari, 2014) to study both high school students with dyslexia and inclusion. A flexible qualitative research design was used in my research by employing semi-structured interviews (SSI) and open-ended interviews to provide opportunities for participants to respond without any 'restrictions of the social reality that individuals hold' (Minichiello et al. 1990, p.87) or attempt to make assumptions about the emerging phenomenon from the interviews. Furthermore, all interviews were conducted in the participants' schools, while parents' interviews were conducted at convenient times and locations in Dubai. The aim of holding the interviews in a social setting was to provide a comfortable, safe place to build rapport and extend conversation towards a discussion (Silverman, 2011; Rubin and Rubin, 2012). Moreover, interviews can explore different viewpoints when researching learning disabilities in education, including those marginalised voices (Ferri, Gallagher, and Conner, 2011).

3.5 A Review of Interviews in Qualitative Research

I decided on the research instrument of interviewing as it is a popular qualitative approach towards obtaining and exploring in-depth perceptions and gaining a view of the reality of individuals (Wengraf, 2001) that is not obtained through observing a setting but through guiding a conversation towards establishing patterns and themes from respondents (Warren, 2001; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Furthermore, I specifically selected interviews, as I aimed to explore dyslexia, SEN support, and policy through asking "questions of why and how those who must carry outlaws in society and about the effects or consequences of the law which can be both intended and unintended" (Adler, 1996, p. 5). However, there are some challenges and guidelines for using interviews. Brinkmann and Kvale (2005) note that one of the challenges of conducting interviews is that the interviewer may have constructed predetermined ideas that he/she wants to achieve through dialogue and discussion.

However, this research used SSI's as a method first to gather data, and these were aimed at 'assessing, confirming, validating, refuting, or elaborating upon existing knowledge' (McIntosh and Morse, 2015, p.1) about dyslexia, inclusion, inclusive support and practice. The flexibility of a semi-structured question format can also help to develop an understanding of experiences, both existing and new relevant ideas about dyslexia further, by 'building the relationship with the respondents, and all the while consciously staying within the context of the research' (Chrzanowska, 2002, p.57). Though, challenges of SSI's include transcription time when recording interviews and being able to modify questions or sensitively probing for emerging and new information when it arises (Kaufamann 2013). To manage this eventuality, I asked each participant to clarify or provide examples of something they said and also ask at the end of each interview if they would like to add anything that has not been covered or asked during the interview.

Fieldnotes were also taken to provide and add in-depth descriptive details on the context that shaped multiple meaningful in research (Given, 2008).
David Fetterman (1998) suggests that fieldnotes include notes about attitude and judgments and can be separated into two areas both observations and personal reflections. This data collection method included taking field notes from school websites regarding SEN/inclusion policy, school inspection reports, observed notes on the SEN department in schools, and additional notes after each interview with the participants. However, the challenges with field notes are they can be viewed 'as being very personal and idiosyncratic in nature and our knowledge of the detail of what is recorded and how the record is used is limited' (Walford, 2009, p. 118). Field notes were used in my research as an instrument towards providing a context of schools and SEN department and added to the SSI's as a foundation towards obtaining data.

3.6 Method of Analysis

The previous chapter outlined the research philosophy towards my research and the qualitative methods to obtain my data using the GM approach. My first initial contact with all Abu Dhabi school principals and SENCOs/SEN teachers at the beginning of a new academic second term in March 2019 and the interviews were conducted in May 2019. Subsequently,

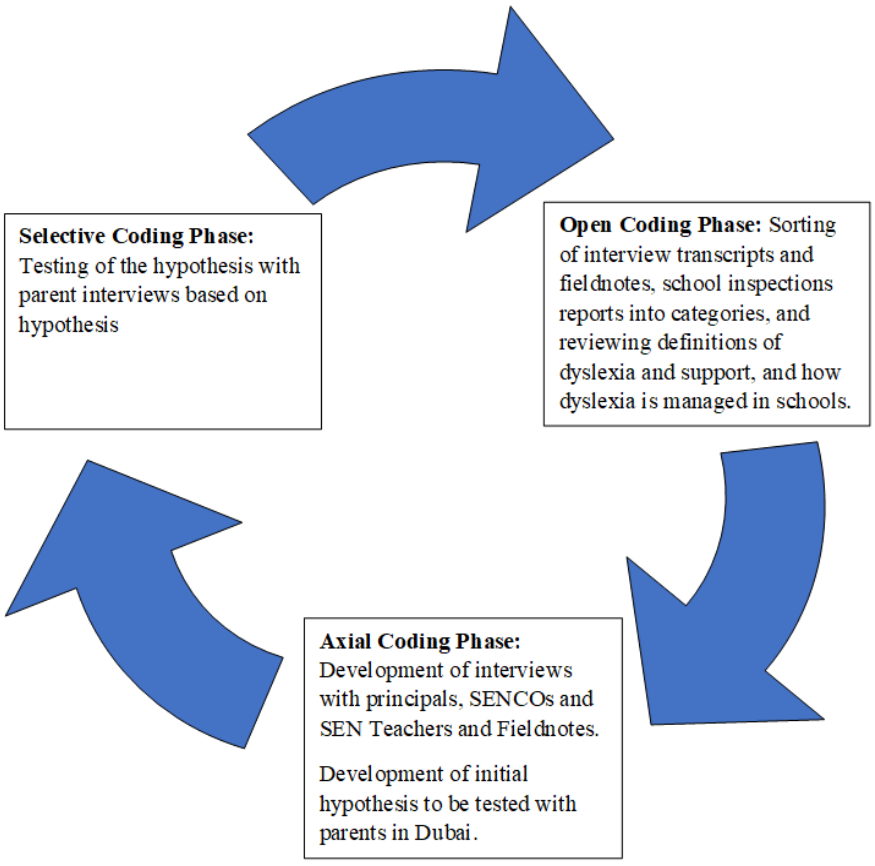
after the axial stages of analysis, I then sent out emails to parents with children identified with dyslexia in Dubai in July 2019 and conducted interviews during August 2019.

In this chapter, I first explain how the three-phased approach towards my GM research approach and how my data was obtained, which resulted in forming my hypothesis for the following stages. This includes the method of obtaining field notes and the ethical considerations that underpinned my research. Finally, I explain the method and procedure of conducting interviews.

3.7 The Three-Phased Approach

The method of GM was adapted to follow a three-phased approach: open, axial and selective coding (See Figure 3), based on Glasser and Strauss, (1967).

Figure 3: **Three-phased approach to coding**



The participants involved with the open coding and axial coding phases are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2: **Outline of sources of data from selected participants and schools in Abu Dhabi**

Participants	Principal	Principal	Principal	Principal	Principal
Support Staff	SENCO	SENCO	SENCO	SENCO	SEN Teacher
Types of Schools	British Curriculum School	International Baccalaureate International School	Indian Curriculum school	UAE Local, mixed curriculum Public School	American Curriculum School

3.8 Open Coding

Audio recordings of the interviews, which were then transcribed were subjected to analysis and open coding (Strauss and Corbin 1999). The development, creation, and description of 'open code codes were one of the sub-targets to search for links, important and recurring meanings with respondents' (Loudova, 2015, p. 50) responses towards dyslexia and support. Furthermore, audio recordings of the open-ended interviews were transcribed and critically analysed, together with field notes, school websites, and school inspection reports (See Appendix 3a). I then highlighted any data responding to my research questions and linked this to an initial code.

Open coding followed the deductive reasoning, a bottom-up approach moving from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories to detect patterns towards formulating tentative hypotheses leading to developing meaning and conclusions or theories (Neuman, 2003, Bernard, 2011 Saunder, et al., 2012). The benefit of using the audio recording as a tool for collecting data in qualitative research is that it replaced any form of handwritten notes (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Confidently, secure protection and explanation to each participant that I would be the only one accessing the recordings were also followed (BERA, 2018).

This initial deductive dynamic stage for GM follows recommendations from GT by Charmaz (2006), in which active codes are identified within the data and can be used for comparative analysis and interrogated further towards the axial coding phase. Deductive logic with evidential support towards a conclusion provides a process of seeking the deductive degree-of-support, which is logically possible with dyslexia support. Rather than an inductive approach with providing a conclusion from total support of research evidence, a deductive research approach seeks to process and measure the support of evidence and consider the total accumulating evidence towards a conditional probability with a hypothesis (Hawthorne, 2018).

A hypothesis was then developed, and the coding phase selected, followed by testing the hypothesis. The data generated from interviews and footnotes were continually compared and contrasted and used to form notes that were continuously drawn on to develop and navigate towards theoretical saturation.

The initial relevant codes that emerged from the interviews with the principals, SENCOs, and teachers were combined with the field notes taken in the schools. Line-by-line coding from the interview transcripts generated emergent tentative labels, which led towards more focused coding when reviewing the transcripts, field-notes, observations, and the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) school inspection reports. Moreover, the second sampling phase, together with the process of constantly coding, comparing, and sorting between all the sources of data, generated more categories and new levels of coding. This cyclical process, as recommended by Holton (2007) enriches the analysis towards higher levels of conceptual abstraction, core emergence, and theoretical integration. The process of data analysis and as Blummer (1954, p.8) refers to as 'sensitising concepts' and provide starting ideas for a 'researcher a sense of how observed instances of a phenomenon might fit within conceptual categories' (Bowen, 2006, p.7-8)

3.9 Axial Coding

This stage refined and differentiated the categories and sub-categories that were formed, based on the relationships and connections between the data from all the data and my research questions. The emerging concepts and categories led to selective coding and theoretical sensitivity, providing meaning to core themes that underpin how dyslexia is

supported and managed in schools. These properties and dimensions were identified in three key areas: (1) parental and teacher attitudes and support, (2) teacher training, experience, and knowledge, and (3) the way dyslexia is identified in school assessments.

These key areas identified provided a tentative hypothesis that could be tested to explain the relationships of supporting dyslexia. This was achieved by interviewing parents with children who have been identified with dyslexia and who attend schools with similar demographics, international school contexts, and curricula. However, for this phase of the research, international schools were located in Dubai, so that a deeper understanding of whether this is unique in Abu Dhabi or more broadly present in the UAE region. Furthermore, Abu Dhabi and Dubai have the most international schools within the UAE and as they are close together this made it more practical for my research.

During the axial coding stage, forming a hypothesis was required to obtain an important, deeper understanding of the causes and interactions of the conditions/consequences of the phenomenon of dyslexia support, contextual strategies, and the community of practice. Obtaining data from parents with children with dyslexia who reside in Dubai also enabled exploration of causal conditions of the phenomena between Abu Dhabi and Dubai, specific contexts and intervening conditions, as well as actions and strategies taken with dyslexia support and the way it is managed. Forming the hypothesis in these two different cities added further concepts towards what Glaser (1978) referred to as the 'coding family'. This corresponds to contexts, causes, consequences, and conditions with parental and teacher attitudes, experiences with teacher training, and the way dyslexia is identified and assessed in schools.

3.9.1 Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling supported the process of collecting data for comparative analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1995), which provided insight from my initial data collection from interviews, field notes, websites, and school inspection reports and subsequently lead me to explore and compare different experiences of the phenomenon to obtain 'multiple dimensions of the social processes under study' (Starks and Trinidad, 2007, p.1375). Although my hypotheses were formed from my original theory, I followed GM development to continue

the deductive process of generating codes and building relationships between my original findings. As part of my continual approach to a constant comparison between my initial interview categories and subsequent interviews with parents, I also used content analysis to assist with the process of coding data based on the hypothesis. Content analysis for coding data, like GM, can 'provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study' (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p.314).

However, I purposefully avoided content analysis in my initial exploration and understanding of dyslexia support and the way dyslexia is managed because it is a deductive and a directed approach guided by a process of framing research with a predetermined theory and hypothesis (Hickey and Kipping, 1996) and explicit categories or inferred meanings (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Using a deductive approach with GM, I could initially contextualise how inclusion, inclusive practice, and support for the management of dyslexia occurs in Abu Dhabi, and then compare and validate these categories in the context of Dubai.

The final research process from broad concepts led to the subsequent 'memo-ing' stage of GM methodology (Glaser, 1998). Sorting and constantly comparing categories and ideas of how dyslexia is defined, supported, and managed and how inclusive education is incorporated in schools and curricula enabled a focus on the research questions that led to the point of theoretical saturation. This phrase integrated theory and literature by moving from the core and related concepts from the categories to developing a hypothesis to explain participant concerns (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). The theoretical coding stage was started once the data were obtained, and the transcripts from parental interviews were analysed.

3.9.2 Qualitative Approach

Using a qualitative approach in this study provided opportunities to interact with participants in their schools. However, in qualitative research, what counts as reality and the ontology of reality are influenced and shaped by the researcher's constructions and assumptions of the social world (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Qualitative methods support research in a constructionist paradigm, as this method can gain 'insight into the processes involved in co-constructions of meaning, lived experiences, cultural rituals, and oppressive practices' (Atkinson, 2017, p.65).

One approach to understanding from a social constructivist perspective is through content analysis of interviews, in which categories are defined before the process of analysis has started (Samy and Robertson, 2017). Two other methodological approaches towards exploring social constructivism are phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. The first aims to seek 'reality from individuals' narratives of their experiences and feelings, and to produce in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon' (Yuksel and Yildirim, 2015, p.1), whilst the second is understood as being socially constructed and maintained from the interaction between people (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014). In this research, both methods were used in different ways. Phenomenology was used to collect data from the principals, supporting SENCOs and support teachers through their descriptions of their experiences of dyslexia and the community of practice used for supporting and managing these learners in their school. GM was used to compare and analyse data collected from participants and to compare with SEN in policies in the participants' schools in Abu Dhabi and from an international perspective (as well as observations of the learning support facilities and materials). However, symbolic interactionalism was also drawn on as an approach when considering inequality and any patterns produced and reproduced (Dennis and Smith, 2015) when defining dyslexia and the community of practice of support for inclusion and inclusive practice through the data analysis and field notes.

While I do not work in any of the schools that took part in this research, I am aware that due to the nature of qualitative research, one of the challenges is to remove the assumptions of my interests in dyslexia and support and the community of practice. Critical constant comparison used in a GM approach can explore assumptions drawn out in analysis and even turn knowledge against itself, exposing the opinions that underline the research (Van Manen, 1990).

I did consider other approaches, including a case study of one school or setting; however, I was interested in gathering data on whether different schools, with different and the most popular curricula in the UAE, held similar/different views on the same topic of dyslexia support, inclusion and inclusive practices in schools. Time and the practical constraints of gaining permission to enter schools to gather qualitative data are why only a small number of schools were selected for this study and as Dubai and Abu Dhabi are geographically close to each other this provided a practical way for me to conduct my research. I conducted this

during the second term of school, May 2019 as often schools and participants are less busy than towards the end of the year when exams are conducted. Parent interviews were conducted in August 2019.

However, from a critical perspective, there is an over-reliance on using interviews to capture stable attitudes, perspectives, or experiences in particular settings (Hammersley and Gomm, 2008). A summary of Hammersley and Gomm's (2008) critique of using interviews for qualitative research as an approach to research suggests the following:

- Interview data are used as a stable source of accounts of events and perceptions of the social world and context in which they are set.
- The nature of interviews in qualitative research may draw out data selected by the participants' interpretations and self-analysis of attitudes and beliefs, which may not reflect reality.
- There can be an assumption with data from interviews to treat participants' accounts of experiences as more or less valid.
- Interviews may generate a discursive place to illuminate or diminish practice and policy.

Removing bias and subjectivity is a challenge in qualitative research, although it 'may be epistemologically in harmony with the readers' experience' (Stake, 1978, p.5). Thus, a researcher needs to attempt 'theoretical sensitivity' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) in that the researcher needs to identify their separate personal insights when attributing meaning to the data. Hammersley (2008, p.86) does note that 'on balance, interviewees' accounts are more likely to be affected by error and bias than researchers' observational reports because interviewees have many other concerns besides providing sound information'.

The decision to use field notes with interviews in GM was made purposefully and carefully as I felt this was the most useful tool to provide the most credible information for my research (Patton, 2002). Further, using SSIs provided opportunities to probe with 'considerable latitude to respondents' (Bryman, 1989, p.124), rather than produce a limitation of structured interviews that 'restricts the exploration of issues that were not anticipated when the questions were written' (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013, p.359). Mertens and Hesse-Biber, (2012, p.79) also argue that researching participants in their contexts calls for more of authentic representation and the possibility of involvement from 'communities previously

excluded from the decision-making process'. Moreover, interviews with consistent questions but the flexibility to adapt questions to the individual participant produce better results (Flick, 2008). To prepare for the interview, email and phone calls were initiated with participants to introduce and briefly describing the theme of the research (Rubin and Rubin, 2012), to explain that the interview would be recorded, and to describe the data collection methods.

However, Hammersley (2008, p.89) offers a radical critique of using interviews in qualitative research. Hammersley (2008) outlines four ways that interviews could yield unreliable results for research: discursive psychology, epistemological skepticism, methodological caution, and reactivity. First, discursive psychology questions how subjective views and accounts reflect unreliable sources of 'accurate representations of cognitive activity or internal events but instead as public displays through which subjectivities are actively constituted and displayed' Hammersley (2008, p.94). Second, epistemological skepticism questions the reliability of perspectives of what is true or false from an individual's construct of how reality is perceived to what is being studied. Third, methodological caution is necessary because participants themselves may be unreliable, as their accounts of reality are not based on rigorous data collection methods. Finally, the term 'reactivity' reflects that interviews are 'shaped by the context, and especially by the influence of the interviewer, that reliable inferences about their attitudes or behaviour in other situations are impossible'. These influences can contaminate data collection and cause tension between the variables of using interviews in research. However, to challenge these influences in this study, triangulation was used, including interviews, field notes, and the process of continuous comparison of data through the GM approach. The research design was validated using triangulation through different methods to validate research data and by identifying the frequency of codes and categories (Mertens and Hesse-Biber, 2012).

3.9.3 A Critique of Qualitative Field Notes and Restrictions to the Studies

The research method of memoing was used and can 'help to clarify thinking on a research topic, provide a mechanism for the articulation of assumptions and subjective perspectives about the area of research and facilitate the development of the study design' (Birks et al., 2008, p. 69). I used memoing throughout my research as a way to map my codes and pragmatically provide a trail towards conceptualizing ideas for categories and form a

hypothesis and build theory (Elliott, 2014).

Field notes were used to record observations, thoughts, and feelings about what was observed (Belk, 2006). Each set of field notes was taken directly after visits to the schools were completed to record impressions of the surroundings in the SEN department and any materials or resources used. To avoid the 'deep ambivalence about whether, when, where, and how to write jottings' (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2007, p.357), I used several sub-headings: materials, how they were used, why these materials were used according to the SENCO, and what materials were specifically used for dyslexia support. Using reflective field notes meant that I avoided using summarised general notes, instead of focusing on specific details to describe dialogue, physical settings of SEN departments, and depiction of activities (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). These notes formed part of the process of 'generating theory' and were typed up and used again as analytic memos when data analysis started (Glaser and Strauss, 1995). Keeping memos helped to theorise ideas about 'substantive codes and their theoretically coded relationships as they emerge during coding, collecting and analysing data' (Glaser, 1998, p.177).

Field notes alone can often cause problems in qualitative research because of the possibility of subjectivity towards participants and contexts being observed (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). Information may put participants in a negative light (De Laine, 2000). Being unattached to the schools, I maintained a neutral position with no conflict of interest with any participants and schools involved in the research that could have affected ethical issues concerning what is reported and any subjectivity toward what is being observed. I believed that both interviews and field notes provided rich data that complemented and supported the GM approach used in my thesis.

As with all research, there were restrictions, which I had to overcome. Ideally, I would have liked to extend interviews with more schools to add breadth to my research data. However, there were practical and security difficulties of obtaining permission to enter schools, as well as the great geographical distances between schools also proved difficult. It is also worth noting that although initially 10 schools were contacted in Abu Dhabi only five volunteered and this may prove to be a challenge for further research amongst different schools.

Although I did interview a mother and daughter who has been identified with dyslexia, I would have liked to interview more learners with dyslexia to gain a richer and important perspective of support in their schools and beyond. However, the issues of ethical challenges of gaining permission with younger children would be difficult to gain and research in schools.

3.9.4 Ethical Considerations

This research followed ethical approval and was conducted according to the University of Bath ethical review board. Furthermore, in my methodology, I applied the ethical principles of proper treatment of all the participants involved (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). In addition to the considerations of rigorous research design, I committed this study and gained approval through the Code of Ethical Research Guidelines from the University of Bath (2018) and the initial research ethical considerations recommended by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007). These ethical considerations were embedded into my research design: informed consent, access and acceptance into the school setting, and complete privacy and anonymity for those participants and schools involved in this research. The British Education Research Association (BERA, 2018, p.9) states that informed consent is 'the condition in which participants understand and agree to their participation without any duress, before the research getting underway'. Informed consent provides a legal embodiment of information to participants about the potential risks and benefits of participating in the study (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). The data drawn from field notes and recordings followed the BERA principles of ethical anonymity and treatment of safeguarding any data stipulated by BERA (2018) by securely protecting this on a password-protected hard drive.

I have taken ethical measures to safeguard my participants by informing them, designing my research with a sound methodological basis, and carefully balancing my role as a researcher who possesses the knowledge to carry it out (Hammick, 1996). Moreover, the standard ethical process was discussed and reviewed continuously with my supervisors throughout my research, and I maintained and considered it central to my research.
Ethical considerations were undertaken following the University of Bath Ethical Guidelines, which included informed consent by email before conducting the face-to-face interviews. Fifteen open-ended SSI question prompts were used for the unstructured face-to-face

interviews to obtain a thick description of data, which generated many data codes, minimising the potential for pre-existing bias and perhaps acquire conflicting descriptions (Hammersley, 2008).

All participants involved in this study were contacted initially by phone. Once they had verbally agreed to participate, I sent a consent form by email. Ten schools in Abu Dhabi were contacted directly, and five volunteered. These are the schools included in this study. Furthermore, I recruited parents by contacting schools in Dubai initially by phone and then email. The email outlined the research and participants' and schools' rights to complete privacy and anonymity. I also provided an overview of the process of being interviewed and the purpose of seeking their views on dyslexia, inclusion, and inclusive practices in schools. The phone call and the email provided participants with a clear overview and understanding of the aims, purpose, and significance of the research, with minimal risks involved. This was all reviewed by the ethics board at the University of Bath. Moreover, participants were told that their views provided a valuable and reliable source about the educational research questions in this study. As this research aligns itself with explorative interviews, I reminded participants that consent is a process that needs to be both 'continually renegotiated and care has to be continually renegotiated' (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007, p.38). Although the research outline was clear in the consent form provided, I did not present the interview questions. Presenting the topics and outline of my study could result in participants forming their answers towards different practices not reflective of their schools and thus threatening reliability or acting in some way similar to a Hawthorne effect towards the responses of those being interviewed.

The Hawthorne effect implies that in qualitative research, any awareness on the part of the subject under study that they are being studied may influence or bias participants' responses that could cause unreliable results (Upton and Cook, 2014). Data from interviews may also reinforce constructions of knowledge from our epistemological viewpoints, which may prove an unreliable source of reality. Hammersley (2010, p.565) also notes that when relying on transcriptions as sacred and reliable sources of data, it is important to provide field notes to provide context and background knowledge, and at the same time being careful to avoid 'speculative ascription of intentions, motives, and social functions'.

In this study, I knowingly used triangulation involving a 'careful review of data collecting through different methods to achieve a more accurate and valid estimate of qualitative results for a particular construct' (Oliver-Hoyo and Allen, 2006, p.1). Besides, I purposely used an open and flexible approach as part of the research design towards the interviews and field notes with the principals, SENCOs, and learning support teachers, and the field notes gathered from all the schools, which provided the conditions and specific themes from the interviews to occur. Moreover, the interview questions were not seen by participants ahead of time, so they could not prepare answers for the recorded interviews. Furthermore, the same interview questions were given to the SENCOs, SEN teachers, and school principals and as these interviewees were conducted in quick succession the participants did not have time to talk to each other. Conducting the research away from my educational institution maintained and reinforced neutrality concerning any power structures between staff and myself and avoided the risk of coercion or any potential problems of 'reactivity' (Hammersley, 2010) in my feelings when conducting my research.

3.9.5 Method of Interviews

The participants were recruited by telephone calls and emails with ten international schools, in which different curricula were taught (British, American, Indian, and UAE state) in public (with mixed curriculum) schools in Abu Dhabi. From an initial list of ten schools, five international, including one UAE public school with mixed curricula volunteered to participate in the research and provided me access to their schools to interview five principals, four SENCOs, and one learning support teacher. Besides, I was provided with individual tours around the schools, learning support departments, and classrooms. Principals were used in this research to explore how dyslexia was identified and supported through policy and culture identified from the perspectives of school leadership. Supporting SENCOs and teachers were included, as both roles provided much information and insight about learners' experiences of education (Cole, 2003; Stringer, 2004).

3.9.6 Interview Procedure with School Principals, SENCOs and SEN Teacher

Participants were informed that the same format was used (open-ended SSI questions) for each participant type: the principal from each school, four SENCOs, and one SEN teacher

(who was responsible for the SENs department in the school). The design for the open-ended format interviews enabled the continuous gathering of data for coding and categories, which led to theoretical sampling. Towards the end of the interview, principals were asked to discuss their personal experience of the interview and the themes of dyslexia and the community of practice from their own experience, both in education and the wider community. They were then thanked for their participation. It took approximately 15 minutes to write up my field notes after each interview with the school principals, who then took me on a school tour and introduced me to either the SENCO or SEN teacher to conduct the next interview. All interviews lasted 30–45 min and were audio-recorded with a Dictaphone. Interviews were transcribed by me. I then reviewed all the audio recordings and compared them with the transcripts for any errors or omissions.

3.9.7 SSI Questions and Field Notes

The qualitative GM was used to collect data as the research aimed at capturing information on the ways that dyslexia is perceived, supported, and managed, together with experiences of this in the schools. Moreover, the 'natural settings' of schools was set as the location to observe and collect data through field notes to add to the thick description of data gathering (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). SSI questions were used because they offered a way to move from general themes and topics to more specific ideas directly relating to the research questions (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Field notes were also taken from the school tour of classrooms, learning support departments, and individual school websites.

An important feature of my research is that my aim was not to seek the final overriding truth or discovery of how best to support dyslexia, nor to blame individuals, groups, schools, or others. Instead, a GM approach seeks to triangulate data from those active actors and policies that in my research not only shape inclusion and inclusive practices with dyslexia and education but also provide valuable insight and investment into awareness and support towards avoiding cycles of unnecessary disadvantage.

3.9.8 The Procedure of Interviews in Dubai

The purpose of furthering research in Dubai was that although Abu Dhabi is the capital,

Dubai is the home of the prime minister (Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum). The two cities or emirates of the UAE have different educational ministries: ADEK (Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge, 2005), which was formally known as Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), and Knowledge and Human Development (KHDA) in Dubai. Both these education ministries are responsible for work in public and private schools and school inspections.

The interviews with parents in Dubai were initiated through phone and email correspondence with the international schools in Dubai using the same curriculum as schools in Abu Dhabi. I also emailed learning support centres through online Facebook dyslexia support groups based in Dubai. Over three weeks, nine parents, and one parent and her daughter, who has dyslexia, showed interest and contacted me. The nationalities and the first languages of the parents (mothers) included 1-Saudi Arabia (Modern Standard Arabic), 1-UAE (Modern Standard Arabic). 1-Morocco (Modern Standard Arabic), 2- German (German), 1-French (French), 1-Ireland (English), and 3-England (English).

My initial email correspondence was sent with details of my research outline, including ethical consent. After consent forms had been returned duly signed, I prepared an online Skype interview, using Amolto Call Recording software to record and transcribe the interviews. I also used a phone app, Call Recorder Pro, which was my back up audio-recording option to record the interviews, in case Skype was not an option, or there were difficulties with Internet connections.

The 20 SSI questions took approximately 45–60 min and were conducted over two weeks after the initial response at the beginning of May 2019 (see Appendix 1). I started each interview by thanking each participant for their time and reminding them about the ethical considerations, including confidentiality and anonymity, and the purpose of my interview. After the interviews were completed, I asked if the participants were OK, and whether I could keep in touch in case I needed to follow up on anything to clarify information or for future research considerations. Fortunately, all of them agreed.

3.9.9 Open Coding and Content Analysis

The aim of my data analysis was twofold: first, to correlate patterns and categories (memoing) from data from my initial literature, school inspection reports, and school websites. GM was used to develop a deductive form of initial core categories and themes of how dyslexia is supported and managed, which led to constant comparisons through axial phases of interviews with school principals, SENCO's and SEN teacher and subsequently formed my hypotheses to test in the selective phase with data from interviews with parents. Unlike GM, content analysis often has a set of preconceived deductive themes to describe materials into identified categories of similar meaning (Moretti et al., 2011), which I wanted to avoid and explore what support was used across the stakeholders. However, directed content analysis was used for the data analysis on parental interviews to provide theoretical saturation towards supporting/not support previous data collected and 'to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory' (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p.1281).

I decided to avoid content analysis as I did not want the process of applying and defining support for dyslexia within predetermined research questions and hypothesis and then finding results or evidence which supported this. As content analysis involves 'measurement, not 'analysis' (Roberts, 2015, p.769) my research was specifically aimed at seeking what types of dyslexia support there is within schools and the challenges with supporting dyslexia by school principals, SEN teachers, and parents.

Instead, through thematic analysis, I aimed to follow the process of analysing my data as part of the GM, as this approach aims at improving and avoiding general ideas towards labelling dyslexia and support for dyslexia. My aim was not to generalise on the complexity of dyslexia and specific support to be given for the milieu of the impact of dyslexia in a particular context. I aimed to follow and provide trustworthiness (Nowell et al., 2017) on my findings by analysing in detail each theme, code, and category that emerges with GM and then form a hypothesis to test and validate my data.

Using a GM approach this chapter has discussed my philosophical deductive position of GM, with CR, as well as my quantitative research methods of collecting and the process of analysing data through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Moreover, this

chapter has also discussed procedural steps of obtaining participants, ethical considerations, and limitations on methodology. My next proceeding chapter will now present how the data was collected using a GM approach and how the data was analysed.

Chapter Four:
Analysis 1 Open Coding

4.1 Findings from Schools in Abu Dhabi

In this chapter, I will begin by outlining my methodological approach of open coding. The longer quotes can be seen in the longer forms of data analyses within the appendix 3a (p.146). I started the open coding process of obtaining data from school inspection reports and school websites. The open coding provided me with a way of breaking down key themes of data into separate units of meaning (Goulding, 1999). The main purpose of open coding was to conceptualise ideas, categorising and labelling data on dyslexia and how it is supported and managed within the school inclusion and inclusive policies and SEN and other departments. Organising ideas provided me with codes of relevant and meaningful codes and structure towards understanding how dyslexia is defined, supported, and managed in schools. It is important to note, that all schools in this research used English as the language of instruction as noted in the literature and as stated in the literature may have played an important role in the manifestation of dyslexia and the need for support. The data obtained from schools provided me with insight into the abstract ideas surrounding these categories. After codes were organised through engaging, comparing, and contrasting these codes and data directed me towards conceptual points for the subsequent Axial phase of my research, through the means of interviewing school principals, SENCO, and SEN teacher at these schools.

Two central questions that emerged and were identified from the inconsistencies within the literature provided me with the direction within the initial open coding and axial coding process GM and then sub-questions under these questions emerged for the selective coding stage. A summary can be seen in Table 3

Table 3: **A Summary of Open Coding**

Open Coding
Research Questions: 1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
Source: School inspection reports, school websites, literature and SEN policies on dyslexia **Critical Realism Ontology:** Empirical (observed dyslexia provision in literature and policies). Actual (Policy and actual values represented in school inspection reports and school websites)
Memoing started: Difficulties with defining dyslexia, challenges for inclusion and dyslexia awareness.
Categories identified: **(a) difficulties with defining, identifying dyslexia and supporting (b) difficulties with assessing dyslexia, (c) understanding inclusion, recognising and the barriers that prevent inclusion, (d) training (e) parental engagement.**

I will now provide a summary of the school reports for the five schools and summarise my questions and results in a discussion.

4.2 The School Inspection Reports in Abu Dhabi

The Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK, 2018–19) website publishes school reports every two years. The purpose of inspection reports is threefold. First, the reports inform the government of Abu Dhabi information about the quality of education. Second, the reports provide schools and board members an external evaluation. Third, the reports inform parents about 'individual schools and school systems as a whole to know what quality of education that their child receives'. However, the transparency of these reports varies greatly, and the reports provide little information on how schools are addressing, supporting, and managing inclusion and inclusive practices for SEN learners. Furthermore, inspections are completed over one week in Abu Dhabi, and measures of 'effective support'

and inclusive practice that support a whole curriculum are unreliable. The pressure for results in schools and evaluation from inspections thus raises further questions as to who owns the school curriculum and who is served by the curriculum, both within schools and in the community in which they are set.

4.3 The British Curriculum School

The inspection report for the British curriculum school (2016–2017) claims to be 'non-selective and inclusive of students with diverse needs'. It identifies eight different SEN categories and the number of current students with these needs: specific learning disability (89), emotional and behaviour disorders (15), autism spectrum disorder (1), speech and language disorders (3), physical and health-related disabilities (2), visually impaired (1), hearing impaired (1), and multiple disabilities (0). Note the broad complexity and the term of dyslexia are not mentioned but placed under 'specific learning disability'.

Besides, students identified in the inspection report as SEN are internally identified by the school, which may mean they do not necessarily receive an external diagnosis by an educational psychologist, which is necessary for support like extra time in exams, or if ex-pat students transition back to their home country where they may require funding for support. There is no mention of any number of special needs students nor of the provision or any SEN accommodation in the British Curriculum School 2019 inspection report. However, the 2019 report awards the British Curriculum School (2018–2019) the highest standard of 'outstanding' and reports that 'teachers make highly effective use of assessments to identify the individual learning needs of children and students'. Moreover, one key area of strength the inspection report highlighted was the 'teachers' comprehensive knowledge of how children construct learning and their skilful use of strategies to accelerate learning'.

4.4 International Baccalaureate School

The school inspection for the IB school in Abu Dhabi (2018-19), which was also rated as 'outstanding', noted 'identification and support for students with special educational needs (SEN) …were outstanding' and 'teaching for effective learning' was also rated as 'outstanding' right across the age groups (Kindergarten primary, middle and high). The report states that

'teachers use excellent knowledge to apply teaching strategies that engage students quickly in their learning'. How these students were identified and assessed and examples of types of accommodation were absent from the report.

4.5 Indian Curriculum School

The current inspection report for the Indian curriculum School (2016–2017) reported that the student population consisted of 3,536 students across the school and that there are coordinators for SEN, across a range of nine SEN categories, with 12 students, including 'intellectual disability, specific learning disability, and autism spectrum disorder,' etc. Dyslexia is not mentioned specifically, and yet the report states that 'in most subjects, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of how students learn best'.

4.6 UAE local (mixed curriculum) School

The school inspection report (2018–2019) states that 'the curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of students with special educational needs'. The inspection report also notes that 'since the last inspection, most teachers have been replaced with more skilled practitioners, mainly from the UK'. However, the report does not state how the school will address meeting learners with SEN, nor does the report state if the UK practitioners are specialists in SEN.

4.7 American Curriculum School

The American curriculum School inspection report (2018–2019) was rated within the second-best category, 'very good'. With a student population of 1865 students, 176 teachers, and 56 teaching assistants, the report does not mention SEN students, SEN identification, provision, or how any accommodation for learning is being addressed. The report does state that 'teachers plan students' learning thoroughly, based on a sound understanding of each child's existing strengths and next steps in learning' and 'teachers design lessons that ensure that all students can work at their own pace'. However, the school inspection report states that 'the school is proud to be fully inclusive'.

4.8 School Websites

Using school websites, which often promote school mission statements, values of inclusion and SEN policies, I aimed to follow a GM approach in which everything is considered data. Field notes were taken both for the open coding process of analysing inspection reports and also through observations of SEN departments to observe resources available during the axial coding. To address my research questions schools' websites, mission statements on inclusiveness, relevant information on SEN support, and school inspection reports directed at SEN and school inclusion. Although the school websites provided no clear areas of how school addresses inclusion and inclusive practise for dyslexia there were guidelines on SEN support given and the costs. The British Curriculum school's website states that 'identification of such difficulties, the school will seek to put in place additional educational provision and/or resources, which may require additional costs'.

All school websites apart from the American Curriculum school provided direct SEN policy and the values of inclusion they followed. The UAE public school website stated that they track SEN policy 'follows UAE Federal Law No 26, 2006 to protect the rights of individuals with a disability. It encourages the inclusion and integration of the individuals 'with special needs'. Conversely, the International Baccalaureate School stated that they 'take our lead from the British Special Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2014'. Another school, the British Curriculum School stated that 'specialists closely collaborate with class teachers to help provide differentiated instruction for students who may be exhibiting difficulties in meeting classroom expectations. However, the school did not provide examples of differentiated instruction and how learners could be supported towards classroom expectations.

4.9 Analysis of research question 1.

1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international and public schools (British, American, Indian, and 'national, mixed curriculum school') in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

It became clear that from the school inspection reports that the following five school reports did not either mention dyslexia and also directly define dyslexia. Although SEN is mentioned

within all the school reports dyslexia is absent. The British School (2016–2017) school report had the most comprehensive categories for SEN with eight different categories for SEN and dyslexia is placed and labelled under the broad 'specific learning disability'. However, with each inspection report outlining the number of students attending at their schools and often promoting the inclusion aspect of nationalities and 'UK practitioners are specialists' in SEN dyslexia is not mentioned and with all schools not identifying dyslexia impacts transparency within the community. This leads me to the next research question:

1a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?

Without defining and identifying dyslexia in the inspection reports then it was difficult to get a clear picture of what necessary accommodations were used to support and manage dyslexia. However, inspection reports did mention that teachers plan students' learning thoroughly, based on a sound understanding of each child's existing strengths and next steps in learning' (American Curriculum) and 'the curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of students with special educational needs' (UAE public School), 'teachers use excellent knowledge to apply teaching strategies that engage students quickly in their learning' (International Baccalaureate School). Furthermore, school websites, apart from the American Curriculum school, provided more details towards the inclusion and inclusive values underpinning SEN policy. However, dyslexia is not mentioned and examples of how schools promote steps of inclusion and inclusive practise are absent, with any forms of training or engaging with parents on support.

The following five categories were identified from the open coding stage from literature sources, research studies on dyslexia and SEN policies: (a) difficulties with defining, identifying dyslexia and supporting (b) difficulties with assessing dyslexia, (c) understanding inclusion, recognising and the barriers that prevent inclusion, (d) training (e) parental engagement.

The school inspection reports from all five schools fail to provide any information on identifying how/ or if any provisions there are to manage dyslexia in any school department.

Without mentioning dyslexia and placing dyslexia under SEN reduces the differences between SEN and encourages misunderstanding towards support within and between schools and particular parents of learners who are identified with dyslexia who the inspection reports serve. School inspection reports do report SEN within the school and the inspection reports (International Baccalaureate School, UAE public school, British School) but do not provide any details on how schools are actively seeking inclusion or providing inclusive practice across the schools amongst teachers and parents.

It is interesting to note that schools in my research are ranked accordingly, but inspections seem to ignore important information on addressing the inconsistencies in the literature and my open-coding research questions. If websites and inspection reports either broadly define SEN and do not mention dyslexia is this also reflective in teachers and the SEN department? How do schools define, manage and fund support and training for learners who have been identified with dyslexia? Do schools and staff share a community of practice on defining, detecting dyslexia and any accommodations to learning across the curriculum? In what ways are these schools shaped by SEN policies on inclusion and inclusive practices towards supporting dyslexia in education and the wider community?

What has been discussed so far in this chapter is how through the literature, school inspection reports and school websites the process of open coding provided me with the means to subjectively determine and reach insights and information towards how dyslexia is defined and supported in schools. To further my understanding the proceeding axial stage will continue systematic data analysis, comparing and constant analysis to reduce categories and prepare for a hypothesis to test for the selective coding section of my research. Thus, in this chapter, the core codes and categories of dyslexia support and how this is managed in schools in Abu Dhabi were identified and developed towards axial stages. These longer quotes and longer data can be seen in the appendix section of my research (p.142). The proceeding chapter will explore the following 11 themes of defining and identifying, supporting dyslexia, difficulties with defining dyslexia, difficulties with assessing dyslexia, understanding inclusion, recognising an inclusive school, barriers of inclusion, supporting inclusion, training, parental engagement and choices in the curriculum.

Chapter Five

Analysis 2: Axial Coding

5.1 Axial Coding

The data derived from the interviews from schools' principals were concepts of defining, supporting, managing dyslexia through inclusive and inclusion at schools were identified and became categories from the open coding. Through the process of stages of analysis these formed categories to further the phenomenon of my two central research questions and the strands of my sub-questions formed the relationships to further expand and investigate analytically through the interviews of school principals, SENCO's and SEN teacher. Selecting central categories to further my understanding of the inconsistencies and gaps of how schools support inclusion and inclusive practices, but fail to explicitly mention dyslexia drove my research towards gathering more general information on how dyslexia is supported and how schools place themselves within the debate on inclusion and inclusive practices. Identifying categories were of critical importance as the gaps appeared frequently in the data and within all cases of the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The sub-questions formed relationships with how dyslexia is supported and managed the categories inconsistencies within the literature, school inspection reports and school websites. These two central themes underlined how my research would add and develop to the field of knowledge that existed. A summary of these questions, methods and codes identified can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: ***A Summary of Axial Coding***

Axial Coding **Interviews with school principals & SENCO's/SEN teacher (Abu Dhabi)** **Empirical, actual, and real experiences (Interviews & Fieldnotes).**
-Board definitions of what dyslexia is and how dyslexia are supported (compared to literature and studies)? -Difficulties assessing dyslexia in and across schools and external assessors being placed outside school settings -A reliance from schools on parents obtaining and external assessments before taking action for supporting dyslexia and providing accommodations (extra time in tests). - A reliance on SEN to support dyslexia within and across the schools

-One school, reported as the only one in Abu Dhabi to offer vocational courses (BTEC), providing an alternative choice within an academic rich curriculum.
-Varied and broad approaches towards adapting materials to support dyslexia amongst the stakeholders at schools, with no principals reporting any engagement with parents when planning effective support in/outside and across the schools.

2. How can an effective community of practice be established in Abu Dhabi to support learners with dyslexia?

2a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?

-Schools shared a philosophical belief towards inclusion. Typical response reported: 'we commit to ensuring that they can be included in school to access the curriculum', 'inclusion is part of accepting and recognising children's needs' (International Baccalaureate School principal, interviewed May, 2019).
-More funding and transparency across schools for dyslexia awareness, training teachers, resources, which causes a barrier towards inclusion.
-Early detection for identifying dyslexia
-More qualified teachers, more support teachers and more awareness towards support
-Teachers having the right mindset towards attitudes and materials with pedagogy in schools
-Less pressure for students with high-stakes exams.
-Training, engagement and accountability towards effective IEP's and implementation in schools
-Support for inclusion and review of barriers towards the number of students identified with dyslexia in classes, accommodations and adaptation in the curriculum and more creative/vocational choices in the curriculum, training for understanding evaluation, skills training for parents and teachers.

-An awareness and implementation of responsibilities of supporting dyslexia amongst all teachers/SENCO's/SEN teachers across the school.

2c. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses?

-Changing parents' attitudes towards understanding how schools support dyslexia at school
-More parental engagement, tensions and concerning attitudes from parents were reported regarding not having parental support and the discriminate stigma towards being identified having learning difficulties form dyslexia.
-Parents of learners who do not have dyslexia were complaining that support for dyslexia would 'hamper' their learners progress (SENCO, Indian Curriculum School, 2019)

3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know learning targets and objects are being met?

-All school principals reported little value towards the effectiveness of an IEP is 'just a document', 'not effective, not practical' (British Curriculum School) 'un manageable targets', 'teachers not following' (American Curriculum School).
-No school principals and SENCO's reported any parental engagement or input towards creating an IEP for supporting dyslexia, creating learning targets for dyslexia.

Three themes from the initial open coding stage and after the axial stage:

- Parental engagement with perspective schools concerning dyslexia
- Difficulties and opportunities with effective identification and assessment of dyslexia
- Differences in teacher training towards supporting and managing dyslexia.

5.2 Difficulties with Defining, Identifying and Supporting Dyslexia

The process of gathering the themes was then identified and coded from the school principals, SENCOs and the SEN teacher, together with footnotes and school inspection

reports (see Appendix 2). Themes which immediately arose during this initial stage of my interview analysis, it was observed that the general trends from school principals had various broad definitions of dyslexia compared to more specific definitions from the SENCOs and support teacher.

It was evident that all school principals had broad definitions and reported that dyslexia were related to a psychological condition. One principal reported that the 'brain is wired slightly differently' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019) whereas another principal said it was 'a psychological condition' (Indian Curriculum, interviewed May 2019). Dyslexia was also defined as impacting communication, with the principal of the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) reporting dyslexia as effecting 'skills of writing', whereas another principal reported dyslexia is defined as 'a lot of problems with reading' (American Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). Furthermore, other communicative skills were also reported by another principal 'I would describe it as a child or an adult who finds it difficult in writing, difficulty with the communication forms' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019).

The second theme that emerged was differences with how dyslexia was supported and managed with the school. It was evident that there is a reliance on parents and external assessments before taking action for supporting dyslexia, as one principal reported, 'first of all, we have to identify it. We would ask teachers who have concerns, and then we would ask parents to get a formal assessment' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

5.3 Difficulties with Assessing Dyslexia

A theme that became clear, which addressed question two (how dyslexia is managed in schools) was the challenge between diagnoses and the response taken to support dyslexia. If there is no system of detection and specifically early detection of dyslexia, as well as not knowing how to respond to a diagnosis of being identified as having dyslexia, then knowing how to manage dyslexia becomes difficult and incoherent across all areas of support. Principals reported reliance on a 'specialist if the school had one', (UAE Local Public School, interviewed May 2019). Whereas, the theme of being fortunate to have trained staff to assess for dyslexia and the perception that support can only be acted upon once assessment takes

place was also reported by one principal 'we are lucky to have someone who can make assessments, with parental permission, then we can put systems in place' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019). However, the same school principal (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019) importantly conveyed that: 'I think it [is] interesting that every school must have a school counsellor in the UAE, but not every school have special needs teachers—that is really surprising'.

The significance of not having someone to recognise and diagnose dyslexia was a disadvantage in schools as identified and reported by one principal 'in my experience we do not have anyone who is specialist in this field, so when we had a student with a problem we do not know what to do and we would see them as only being weak in reading" (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). Underlying difficulties of the way diagnoses for dyslexia is carried out was also evident by following a medical diagnosis for detection, 'first of all, it is very difficult to find out the problem with the patient of dyslexia, detecting it. But when it comes to reading or writing, his intelligence and the outcomes of reading and writing don't match, so we find that he is suffering from some problems' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

However, only one principal reported that at his school 'we use internal assessments to find any difficulties and then set learning targets with the teachers' (American Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). However, I noted with all the responses from all principals and SENCOs/SEN teacher that parents need to be notified first and schools need to have permission for any internal assessment to take place. External reports were reported as a vital instrument and essential document, which results in obtaining more support time during formal external school tests or assessments.

Though, schools either 'did not have any facility inside the school to do assessments' (Indian School Curriculum principal, interviewed May 2019), or inadequately trained assessor to conduct and recognise dyslexia as reported by one principal who stated that we 'do not have anyone who is specialist in this field' (UAE Local Public School, interviewed May 2019). An evaluation for the detection for dyslexia becomes the way to obtain support and instrumental for external school exams, 'once we get reports, we can get extra time in exams' (British Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019). However, it immediately became clear

that if schools do not have internal specialist assessors then, as the principal of the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) testified that schools have to trust on, 'reports, which have to be done outside. We have someone who flies in from the UK; you have to book'. Whereas another principal emphasised reliance on reports and dyslexia diagnosis was the key to provide and maintain accountability for supporting learning, 'once we receive assessments, we make manageable SMART targets' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019).

Interestingly, although all principals reported the significance of how dyslexia evaluation reports were instrumental towards support response, no one reported how reports provide key information on what dyslexia is and how the report could be used to play an important role for awareness and training amongst teachers and the curriculum. However, rather than focusing on how to support students, only two principals did report that once they receive any formal assessment for dyslexia, the school 'can support and get extra time in exams for students' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019) and 'then we are able to put systems in place' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019).

5.4 Barriers that Prevent Inclusion

The third theme that emerged in the open coding was aimed at assessing how dyslexia was accepted within the framework of inclusion in schools. It was noted that all participants interviewed reported a similar concept towards the meaning of inclusion as summarised in the following responses, 'being able to cater for all student's needs' (International Baccalaureate School principal, interviewed May 2019), and also reported by the principal of the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'giving learning chances to all children'. More specific examples were also reported and summarized by the following response by the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'inclusion is that when we include all students into our planning, teaching and learning activities, we try to include all students with any sort of problems with normal, below average, above average so that all students are challenged in education and activities, and then everybody is learning, everybody is making progress, and this is what I understand'.

However, although the values for inclusion were similarly identified and reported with all

participants what emerged was the challenges with inclusion and managing, as conveyed by the British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'severe learning needs, we might not be able to cater for that person'. While accommodating and the practicality of effectively placing SEN's in schools was also detailed by UAE Local Public-School principal (interviewed May 2019) 'disabilities, [which are] not so severe can [be] put in the classroom, with some assistance and that they should be not separated'. Being overstretched to accommodate those needs at school was also reported by the same UAE Local Public School principal (interviewed May 2019) and also conveyed in details from one SENCO from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) 'we have a department with just two people which is not enough in a school [which] has 1800 students' and 'It is not easy; schools should address all learners' needs.

Challenges of inclusion reported by the principal from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) 'I would say in my experience that it is something very hard to get in our school because of funding for resources'. Though, the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) conveyed an optimistic and specifically view that take the journey towards inclusion is beneficial:

'All school[s] must be inclusive, as a matter of policy as I have seen. In my 25 years of experience in the field of education, I have seen special students making good progress, failing in the mainstream of education and it has helped those unfortunate students get better lives and over their hardships'.

However, it became very clear from all the participant's reports that a lack of funding was an obstacle towards obtaining inclusion. Furthermore, funding differences, which affected the quality of inclusion between private and public systems of education also emerged as an obstacle, as the British School Curriculum principal (interviewed May 2019) testified, 'absolutely, yep, there is a perception between public and private can be perceived as two different types of quality and 'to be honest, private international schools have more funding for supporting special learners' and also reflected with the response from the American Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'To be honest private international schools have more funding for supporting learners'.

Though, it was reported by two principals that the importance of inclusion in education is that

it is a process, which takes time to develop and the benefits of inclusion can go beyond the school if the government support is provided. Firstly, conveyed by the UAE Local Public-School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'The problem, in my opinion, is that inclusion is a new idea in the UAE. With time it will develop; it only really started in my school 5 years ago' and also similarly stated by the slow pace towards actively supporting inclusion with views conveyed from the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'I think that now schools are getting better, whether if it is special parking, ramps, special gates, entrance/exit, a lift for special needs. I believe that the government are doing their job by saying this to schools, but in education, I am not convinced'.

However, experiences and differences of what inclusion look like in different schools was also made apparent by the International Baccalaureate School SENCO (interviewed May 2019), who reported that 'Some schools I have worked in are different, have different feelings, do things differently… I have a mixed experience'. One SENCO from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) stated that gender segregation was needed for SEN support is necessary to 'teach boys – girls separated, and boys need more support'. Whereas, another SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) reported that schools do filter based on SEN provision, and that 'parents bring their children here as international schools turn them away'.

A significant barrier towards inclusion, which impacts early detection for dyslexia is the lack of specialists and resources at schools. These barriers were reported by all the principals, 'we need more specialists in the school or provision from outside' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), 'there would be a number of students with special needs with the right equipment who understand those students' (UAE Local Public School, interviewed May 2019), 'well-resourced school, with lots of suitable materials with special training for teachers' (American Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), 'classrooms, materials, resources' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019) 'resources' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019).

Teachers and their attributes towards inclusion are also resources, which can make an impact on effective support for dyslexia. Responses from principals were interestingly varied, with placing importance on teachers. The British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May

2019) stated that 'attitude; the skills you can learn', whereas other mixed views on more training and knowledge were needed, 'even with one hour of training that we give new teachers, they don't have enough training' as conveyed by the International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019). A similar view was also expressed by the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) 'unfortunately, I do not feel that the teaching staff are well trained for teaching to children who have dyslexia; not very skilled in dealing with such issues' and the International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019) who reported that there is a lack of 'knowledge to be able to support children'.

The theme of unqualified teachers in supporting dyslexia and preparing teachers to support dyslexia in the class was also expressed from principals, 'I don't think that currently most of those people teaching in schools who are educated in schools have a degree in certain subjects, but they don't have any skills to deal with those areas of dyslexia, for example', as stated by the principal from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019). A similar view by the American Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) was also conveyed with how teachers inadequately adapt materials 'most teachers do not cope in class, as they do not have the skills to differentiate, with so many children in class'. SENCOs from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) and the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) also expressed teachers struggle to understand diagnoses from evaluations and also not effectively modifying and differentiating material, 'a lot, some teachers really put a lot of effort are brilliant and change their resources, some teachers, older ones sometimes don't read reports we give them', 'knowledge and attitudes with SEN are different; some teachers it is a shock to change their practice' and 'we get new teachers, often and some experienced with special needs and some teachers this is not the case'.

The coalition between the number of teaching years of experience and how effective a teacher is with gaining an understanding and supporting dyslexia was significantly reported by five principals. A summary of what was reported by the following responses, not having 'knowledge of the person's needs' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), and 'many young teachers would probably say that they do not have much experience. They would be able to refer that child on and be able to say they have difficulties, but I think there are many teachers, myself included, that would find it quite difficult with knowing exactly

what to do with a dyslexic child' (International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019).

However, identifying what acted as barriers towards inclusion with teachers (knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials), three main themes emerged, attitudes, skills in class, and training and experience. Teachers having the right mindset for inclusion was seen as an important factor for supporting dyslexia, as reported by the principals from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) and British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'the important one is attitude, the lack of specialised qualification or skills you can learn, and, unfortunately, I do not feel that the teaching staff are well trained for teaching to children who have dyslexia, not very skilled in school does not offer such services' and 'I think the important one is attitude, the skills you can learn'.

A lack of qualified teachers with SEN was also reported, 'I don't think that currently most of those people teaching in schools who are educated in schools have a degree in certain subjects, but they don't have any skills to deal with those areas of dyslexia' (UAE Local Public-School principal interviewed May 2019). Having a lack of qualified teachers prevents students' access to school was also reported by the principal from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) and 'we feel very honest with parents…that we cannot take any more special students because we don't feel we have staffing capacity to support them'.

Though teachers' experiences are broad, with some teachers recognised by SENCOs from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) and the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) as placing a lot of effort, these efforts are hindered due to comprehending formal diagnoses reports, 'some teachers put a lot of effort, are brilliant and change their resources; some teachers, older ones sometimes, don't really read reports we give them' and 'we have many teachers with different knowledge, understanding, some good, some not so good, with dealing with support', 'some teachers are not experts, don't know what to do and need us to help' and 'we get new teachers, often, and some experienced with special needs and some teachers, this is not the case'.

Concerning parents' attitudes towards dyslexia and whether this caused a barrier towards inclusion at school three principals reported that there were tensions of not having parental support and difficulties with understanding towards SEN as a stigma. The SENCO from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) reported, 'parents are not open because they think it would discriminate against that child', and similarly a lack of parental understanding was reported by the SENCO from International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019), 'parents complain that we are not supportive enough'. A contrasting view towards those parents with children without learning difficulties was also reported, 'complaints from parents that do not have special needs students do not appreciate and accept and they feel that this support will hamper the progress of their child' (SENCO Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019).

The significant theme emerged regarding differences with funding SEN in different schools was also reported as the main barrier towards the quality of support and subsequently effective inclusion, as reported by the British School Curriculum principal (interviewed May 2019), 'there is a perception between public and private [it] can be perceived as two different types of quality', 'people think if we offer a British curriculum, we must have British supporting teachers'. Differences with funding amongst the schools when supporting dyslexia was also reported by the American Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'to be honest, private international schools have more funding for supporting special learners'. One reason for this disparity of funding amongst schools was SEN is not seen as a priority and also a lack of underlying awareness as reported by the SEN of the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'special needs are not really taken into consideration when targets are used in the media'. More worrying is the report of exclusion of SEN learners in schools by one SENCO teacher in the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'parents bring their children here as international schools turn them away'.

5.5 Recognising an Inclusive School

A developing theme that linked with the understanding of inclusion was also participants reporting the difficulties and challenges in their schools. The principal from British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) reported that he thought an inclusive school was 'ideally a dream position, but it is beyond our school and it is my philosophical belief is that

once we have accepted students, we have to; we commit to ensuring that they can be included in school to access the curriculum', and 'inclusion is part of accepting and recognising all children's needs' (International Baccalaureate School principal, interviewed May, 2019). The wider definition of inclusion was also conveyed by the principal of the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'inclusion is not directed only related to dyslexia; it is about all types of learner. Inclusion is that when we include all students into our planning'.

5.6 Supporting Inclusion

How schools manage and support inclusion addresses my initial second research question, how dyslexia is managed in schools? An emerging overlapping theme of defining, understanding with supporting and managing dyslexia, the difficulties on how materials and practice can be adapted and embedded in a school curriculum, as reported by the principal of the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'curriculum that is tailored for them because there are certain mainstream things that not be relevant for them or something that they don't want to accept' and also reported by the principal from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'staff need to be helped with training to be able to fully understand these different problems, not only being able to support students but also being able to observe students and how to detect because there are many students we may not know and they may be suffering'. There was a need for support for inclusion as expressed by the principal from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019), 'especially in the Middle East, we need support in all areas with special needs and inclusion' and as with the SENCO from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) who stated that what is needed is 'more help, more support teachers'.

The practical implications of how teachers and schools inclusively placed and managed SEN with class sizes was also reported by two principals, 'there is no proof that class sizes matter' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), 'in India there are sometimes twice as many students in the class compared to here, so it is very well controlled here' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). However, other reports by the principals of the UAE Local Public School, interviewed May 2019) and American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) provided grounds for more time and detect and support learners with dyslexia, 'the less students, the more possibilities for teachers to follow up with people with

special needs' and 'if the class size is big, like in this school, 18-25, then it is hard to support and give the time for learners who have dyslexia, teachers have complained that size matters when supporting and helping children with dyslexia and the policy curriculum'. A more of a concerning view was expressed with excluding students by the International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'we are very careful in our selection of students, so we would have only one special needs student in per class, and when we fill up these places, we are very honest with parents… that we cannot take any more special needs students'. Problems with having many students to support were also reported by the UAE Local Public-School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'we have too many sometimes in one class and it causes problems. However, a significant theme of funding support can be best summarised in the two following responses from principals, 'time and funding to train teachers and assistants in early detection and support' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), and 'training and funding teachers to do courses' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

5.7 Training

Other significant themes which bridged research question one and the second research question together emerged under the category of training. These themes were of training, for teachers and parents, higher priorities for SEN support, awareness, changes/adaptations in assessments, government awareness and support and parental engagement were all reported. The UAE Local Public-School principal (interviewed May 2019) reported that 'more training for parents and teachers at our school could help', as well as 'training and government support and money'. The Indian Curriculum school principal (interviewed May 2019) reported that teachers are 'not very skilled in dealing with such issues', with similar views shared with UAE Local Public School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'I don't think that currently that most of those people teaching in schools who are educated in schools have a degree in certain subjects, but they don't have any skills to deal with those areas of dyslexia for example' and also 'most teachers do not cope in class, as they do not have the skills to differentiate, with so many children in class' (American Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). Moreover, the International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019) reported that current UAE government policy needs to prioritise SEN support in the UAE, 'I think it is interesting that every school must have a school counsellor in the UAE, but not every school

has special needs teachers; that is really surprising'.

Training for understanding dyslexia evaluations and setting effective learning targets with IEPs also became a reported challenge, which arose across the participants. There was difficulty with interpretation with the evaluation for dyslexia, as the UAE Local Public School principal (interviewed May 2019) testified 'now for dyslexic students, I feel that this is not being translated correctly at times' and also by the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) who stated that 'on paper and on file this is important, but I do not find these effective, very helpful practically'. A comparable response came from one SENCO from the British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), who reported that 'there is a mixed approach to how effectively they are used, some staff embrace these and use it well'.

An IEP was also reported by all principals, who reported that an IEP is either 'just a document that it is not fixed and travels around the staff' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), 'Not effective, not practical' and 'teachers don't understand them' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019). The way of setting and evaluating learning through an IEP and how this impacts learning across the school was also reported by the British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) as ineffective, 'for me, it is a guide, it assists people, it travels around staff, but I don't want it to be a document that is fixed forever'. Another principal from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) reported that only some teachers use it, 'well I think that some teachers haven't had that much access to knowing how to fill them in'. Furthermore, two principals (American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019) reported that the IEP was not effectively written, as 'teachers do not often include too many targets, which are not clear or easy to achieve for these learners' and 'I have found that sometimes when I have actually looked at them, they have put targets that are not achievable or manageable'. A similar view was reported by SEN teacher from the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'teachers don't know how to use materials and make resources for children with dyslexia', 'teachers not following, effectively targets. However, in contrast, four SENCOs and SEN teacher responded that the IEPs had value, with one SENCO from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) reporting that IEPs had 'reachable targets, monitored regularly'.

Who is responsible for supporting dyslexia at schools was also an emerging theme throughout the research data analysis. A SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) reported that the responsibilities of support were a challenge, 'teachers think it is our job to support'. A similar view was reported by British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'there are some staff that come in and say that this is the way I teach, no differentiation'. The SENCO from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) reported that the number of SEN students with IEPs would be difficult to track in class, as 'all teachers train to use these in classes with learners sometimes, but the number of learners makes it hard to track'.
However, one SENCO from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) provided an approach towards making sure learning targets are met in the IEP amongst the different teachers: 'We use a learner passport, which each child uses in their classes, which has targets, learning targets they need, and teachers use this in class and sign off when targets are met'.

A call for training and awareness needed for teachers, as well as parents, were also mentioned by one SENCO from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'mandatory training for teachers not only for dyslexia, but all SEN' and also by the SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'sharing ideas of support and serious awareness', with as the SENCO from International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019) stated, 'more awareness and opportunities to learn about dyslexia in the community', whilst for parents '[a] need to get their children with dyslexia assessed, some parents don't really do this, and this makes it difficult in class'.

However, financing training and SEN was interlinked with inconsistent costs placed on parents were reported amongst the participants. For example, four principals reported that the costs came from parents, and in the public school, support came from the Abu Dhabi government. Each school principal from the international schools reported different costs and funding structures, which impacts on inclusion, for example: 'thirty per cent of the annual fee is for those students who require a one to one continuous support' (British Curriculum School, (interviewed May 2019), whereas one principal reported, 'parents could pay 6–7000 [Dirhams], some parents, some parents refused to pay more than 3000 and that is a barrier

towards the support that child is given' (International Baccalaureate School, (interviewed May 2019), 'students have to pay double, which is approved by ADEK because we say that we provide them with counsellors and special staff and because we want them to have a shadow teacher in the classroom' (Indian Curriculum School, (interviewed May 2019) and 'parents help pay 2000-3000 (Dirhams) for class assistants' (American Curriculum School, (interviewed May 2019). It is worth noting that only one principal from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) responded to any direct funding, 'we get funding from the government for books, support assistant'.

Furthermore, the views of SENCO's regarding their budget for supporting SEN and dyslexia was also reported as a challenge. The SENCO from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) stated that 'we do get a department budget which is very tight', and funding inadequacy was also addressed with the SENCO from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019), 'I get a budget in this department…we have some difficulties if we need more assistants' and often funding support is placed on parents, as also the SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) conveyed 'we get a budget from the school fees, and parents pay extra for support classes after school'. Ways to overcome and support these financial challenges with supporting SEN was reported by the SENCO from the UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019), 'we need more training and government support' and similarly from the American Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'outside help, government and more serious discussion and activity in this area'. Besides, engaging with 'parents understanding on funding, on what, how we support special students' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

5.8 Parental Engagement

Parental engagement towards understanding the support offered at school was also reported by the British Curriculum School SENCO (interviewed May 2019), as 'parents need to be realistic and understand what support we offer'. Furthermore, the International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019) also reported that there is a need for parents 'to get their children with dyslexia assessed' and 'parents need help for supporting dyslexia' was also reported by Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019). One SENCO from UAE Local Public School (interviewed May 2019) also reported a disconnect between the

amount of support on offer from his school as 'some parents we never see at parent term meetings'. However, one SEN teacher from the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) reported on parents' understanding of the demands for support, curriculum and disengagement in school meetings, where 'parents need to understand the pressures schools are under and the limited support we have' and how SEN's impacts on the difficulties with accessing curriculum choices 'some parents don't understand enough about challenges of the diploma programme' conveyed by the SENCO at the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019).

5.9 Choices in the Curriculum

I was interested to seek whether the curriculum and subject choices provided by schools are more of a challenge and impacted support with managing dyslexia. Only one principal from the British Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) provided, for example, vocational routes in school for students, 'this year Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC). We are the only school in Abu Dhabi who run the BTEC, vocational programme, we have bought in engineering, sports science and business studies, we are thinking of bringing in more'. Other ways schools adapted and supported dyslexia was more broadly represented, as conveyed by the principal from the International Baccalaureate School (interviewed May 2019), 'maybe some one-to-one work with some students with our special need's teacher, they may be withdrawn, they might be supported in the classroom, but we [need] to ensure that their coverage is the same. The work they do is scaffolded a bit better, or a bit differently, like coloured gels, a different pencil grips', 'it is the same curriculum, but sometimes we provide them with a worksheet at an easier level' (Indian Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019), 'no, no, the only thing is at all we give those with dyslexia and with special needs we reduce the amount of material they need to cover' (UAE Local Public School principal, interviewed May 2019) and 'in this school, we give extra time during school time'. (American Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019).

However, SENCO's reported that more support for dyslexia was needed when course work is necessary, ' learners with dyslexia need more support with their exam studies and essays' (International Baccalaureate School principal (interviewed May 2019), 'we help students with making materials easier' (Indian Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019), and

'the American curriculum is broad… learners with dyslexia can find it hard preparing for standard SATs in secondary' (SENCO from the American Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

One SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (May 2019) reported that 'if we get any assessments, some teachers think it is our job to support'. On the other hand, the Indian Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) reported difficulty with governmental regulations implementing 'assessment and how to assess dyslexia is a problem, and I have raised this issue with many ADEK'S meetings, and there was no satisfactory response to it.' The American Curriculum school principal (interviewed May 2019) also expressed that as dyslexia can impact reading skills more support for children for whom Arabic is not their first language, as 'Arabic is compulsory' in all schools in the UAE.

One evolving theme that also linked with the curriculum was how educational outcomes 'put pressure on students with learning difficulties', as stated by the British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) and schools to be inclusive. It was noteworthy, that all five principals raised concerns about the necessary pressure on students, as best summarized by the two following responses from principals, 'I think it puts pressure on every student and unfortunately, the keys [educational targets] to get our academic achievements' (British Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019), 'it puts a lot of pressure on students, schools and teachers, and this is why many 'good schools' do not accept such children' (Indian Curriculum School, interviewed May 2019).

Furthermore, reports of pressures from the curriculum and academic achievement were felt more for those learners with SEN, 'sometimes the pressure is good, but you have [to be] manageable; you can't get the pressure that makes you crumble, and we have had a couple of students who have crumbled, and we have had to deal with this…unfortunately, I see this as getting worse…there is no room for learning support; this is not recognised' (British School Curriculum principal, interviewed May 2019). Schools also felt pressure from ADEK, as informed by the principal of the International Baccalaureate School, interviewed May 2019), 'we will never get grades…in our ADEK inspections, the likelihood we would be weak in every inspection and [this] does not mean we are weak, it means that the children are not making the progress that is in align with the UK curriculum'.

Moreover, benchmarking schools on the grounds of inflexible external standardised assessments and learners who have SEN was also mentioned by the Indian Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019), 'regular assessment in the class you are OK, you can adapt for learners, you have control, it is your internal exam, you can change to suit students; but what about external [ones] seen on league table results like PISA [Programme for International Student Assessment]'.

The importance of test results on education was also reported by the principal of the American Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019), 'It does seem that targets and test results drive most schools'. Furthermore, the UAE Local Public-School principal (interviewed May 2019) reported that pressure of educational outcomes relates to awareness in society and a refusal from parents to get their child assessed for these differences and can be a starting point of early intervention, 'we still don't recognise in this culture any understanding of dyslexia. I met with parents, and when we tell them [parents] that we need a report to understand because we think your son might have this, they say what do you mean a report, do you mean that we need to go to a psychiatric, why are asking me this, what is wrong with my son, it is the problem with your school'.

The British Curriculum School principal (interviewed May 2019) also reported concerns about tests putting pressure on outcomes: 'I feel that this is the way education is going, unfortunately, but is hard for me to convince learner at times that grades are not everything'. Another SENCO from the Indian Curriculum School (interviewed May 2019) also underlined this concern: 'we are under pressure with supporting student and getting grades, good grades from parents'. The pressure of school inspections was highlighted as a concern from the UAE Local Public-School SENCO (interviewed May 2019) who reported, 'School ADEK inspections and test marks are making teachers leave'. Parents not understanding the pressures from the IB curriculum and not having opportunities in the curriculum to provide alternative routes for education success were also reported by the International Baccalaureate School SENCO (interviewed May 2019), 'parents don't realise that the diploma program is tough, children with learning difficulties have few options in this school, not like in our school in Dubai, where options, more options are available'.

I further probed participants on what may provide a community of practice to reflect the community of supporting and managing dyslexia, I noticed specific themes were reported by the participants, 'wider subject opportunities, change of teacher attitudes towards SEN, more trained supporting staff' (International Baccalaureate SENCO, interviewed May 2019) and 'government support with funding and the consideration of Arabic with learners who have reading difficulties' (UAE Local Public School principal, interviewed May 2019). A 'breadth of subject choice, open attitude', 'broadband of support...dyslexic specialists' (British Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019), 'all staff need to be trained' (Indian Curriculum School principal, interviewed May 2019) and 'if the government is serious about the idea then they need to be serious about the budget' (UAE Local Public School principal, (interviewed May 2019) were reported comments, as well as 'Arabic is compulsory, but it is difficult for learners with reading difficulties in the first languages' (American Curriculum School principal, (interviewed May 2019).

5.9.1 Summary and Analysing

Collecting and coding data using field notes followed a GM approach in illuminating contextual and specific data generating from my research questions. Field notes were also used to uncover relevant conditions from the interviews with principals, SENCOs and SEN teachers and to determine how these actors respond to changing conditions and the consequences of their actions. Field notes were taken during visits to the SEN departments and classrooms where dyslexia and SEN are supported, notably concerning observable materials and equipment used to support and manage learners with SEN/dyslexia.

SEN departments and classrooms had different materials and equipment to support SEN and dyslexia. Two school departments (British Curriculum School, May 2019) and the International Baccalaureate School (May 2019) had the same phonics reading books. One department at the Indian Curriculum School (May 2019) had no technology and no visual board, with no observable visible material for reading. A classroom used to support learners at the with dyslexia and SEN had two computers, one, the SEN teacher at the American Curriculum School (May 2019) said, was broken and had damaged headphones. That school's support was not observable in the departments. In summary, from the five schools, only two had similar reading materials (British Curriculum School (May 2019 and the International

Baccalaureate School, May 2019), and although some material was presented on walls, such as large printed reading and phonemes towards reading skills, there were no dyslexia awareness or any obvious adapted material in all five schools.

In the continuation of systematic processing of gathering data for analysis and constant comparison data in the axial stages of my research to focus on the key core categories and the strands of relationships of how dyslexia is supported and managed in schools. What is evident from all the schools in this research is the disconnect between what the inspection reports state and what the interviews report. None of the school reports mentions dyslexia, although statistics show that between 5%–10% of students may have dyslexia. Direct reference to inclusion is only mentioned in one school report (the American School report, 2017–2018). However, how specifically dyslexia was supported and managed, as well as how schools are particularly addressing the inclusive practice of support and managing inclusion was absent.

Throughout, the process of open coding through the literature reviews, school's inspection reports and school websites a contention of memos were added to the observations and field notes I took in the school SEN departments. These notes were written to further develop, create and select categories regarding dyslexia support and the way dyslexia is managed, then this formed a hypothesise to test. The key themes which arose at the axial stages of data analysis were broad definitions of dyslexia from the principals compared to the articulate responses from the SENCO's and SEN teachers. The evident theme of support was identified for dyslexia, but only in response and reliance on external assessments and reports of being identified as having dyslexia. Interestingly, nobody reported how they use these assessments and if the teachers engage/ consult with those specialists/parents who identified and received the assessments/reports identifying dyslexia when managing and planning support in their schools. However, all participants across the five schools reported the difficulties of identifying dyslexia, with only one specialist who could identify dyslexia and 'make assessments' (International Baccalaureate School).

Although, the values of schools following inclusion was identified in the open coding process from school inspection reports and websites principals and SENCO's reported the practical challenge of supporting inclusion at their schools. The challenges of managing and

supporting inclusive accommodations were based on reports of funding and inadequate supporting teachers to the number of students. Although, challenges were identified for inclusion optimism and the benefits of inclusion by allowing 'unfortunate students get better lives and over their hardships' (Indian Curriculum School principal, May 2019).
Funding and training were reported and identified as causes and barriers that prevent inclusion and inclusive practices to support and manage dyslexia at schools. A lack of funding to support, sustain inclusion, training for teachers on how to identify dyslexia, and support with differentiating materials to support dyslexia through the curriculum. Training on how to effectively manage learning and support for dyslexia with an IEP was also reported. Furthermore, training for newly qualified teachers on how to support dyslexia at schools was also reported, which may suggest that initial teacher training may not be adequate.

One SENCO (British Curriculum School, (May, 2019) also reported that parents need to be trained on understanding dyslexia. SENCO's also reported that parents are not aware of how much support is given and that support may hamper progress for special needs students. SEN was not seen as a priority at schools amongst SENCO's, with reports that differences between how much funding is allocated to SEN amongst different international schools. With international schools deregulated on any standard funding mechanisms, the amount spent on support is blurred. More problematic to managing dyslexia is that schools only react to how to support dyslexia once they receive an external report identifying dyslexia and this prevents forward funding planning. Moreover, some schools reported that significant costs '6-7000 Dirhams', (British Curriculum School, May 2019) are placed with the parents.

The theme of parental engagement became evident in the axial phases of data analysis with SENCO's reporting that parents needed help with getting dyslexia identified for their children, an unrealistic understanding on what support and challenges of supporting dyslexia at schools with the curriculum and problems with very little engagement with parents.
The choices and the challenges with the flexibility to address support in assessments and standardised tests was also reported as a barrier for supporting and managing dyslexia. It became evident that schools broadly suggested ways to adapt materials for necessary accommodations of supporting dyslexia. However, only one school (British Curriculum School) offered different vocational and less academically challenging course work and summative high-stakes testing routes by offering BTEC.

The following chapter will proceed with the selective coding and final stage of data analysis. Furthering the categories and the relationships of how dyslexia is supported and managed in schools I would hope to validate these findings, categories by testing a hypothesis with parents of children identified with dyslexia at similar curriculum schools in Dubai.

Chapter Six:
Analysis 3 Selective Coding

6.1 Introduction to the Selective Coding

I aim to provide in this next chapter a continuation of further additional data process of how these categories were sought with parents' insights towards how dyslexia is supported and managed in schools, homes and, within the community of Dubai. By comparing and contrasting the representative data from all interviewed educators in Abu Dhabi the same themes were used for those participants from Dubai. Three areas that emerged from my initial open coding and development of the axial stages of forming categories, a) difficulties with defining and identifying dyslexia (b) assessing dyslexia, (c) understanding, recognising and the barriers that prevent inclusion, (d) training (e) parental engagement, I aimed to attempt not just to broaden my data collection, but also deepening and strengthen my data findings, with comparing responses with SEN policy and literature. Are there obvious connections between the raw data found in the stages of open-coding-axial coding with parents report in the selective coding phase? An examination of values of inclusion and inclusive practice identified in open coding support or refute what the participations report? If so, how and how not? Is there a central phenomenon of core categories with a community of practice with how parents support and manage dyslexia with schools and at home?

Using a GM deductive approach my research aims to further develop categories identified in my open coding and axial stages within the literature, school inspection reports and, school websites and interviews with school principals, SENCO's and the SEN teacher. Through the process of analysing codes and categories, my research aims not to conclusively provide a theory or attach my findings to theories of how to support and manage dyslexia to solve the barriers preventing effective inclusion and inclusive practices within the selective stages of testing a hypothesis. In contrast, my research aims are not to seek an overwhelming conclusion that attaches a theory, but instead offer building blocks that identify starting points to further research towards reflective support and manage inclusion and inclusive practise with dyslexia. Building on a narrowing deductively process towards confirmation from a hypothesis it is hoped that validating data or not will proceed my research towards how support and the way dyslexia can be identified across those stakeholders involved, which in

turn will provide the basis of future research. My tentative hypothesis for the selective stages is that parents of children identified with dyslexia will report a deeper understanding towards defining dyslexia, the impact of dyslexia in education, provide more comprehensive ways to support and manage dyslexia and a deeper awareness of the practical barriers inside and outside schools that prevent inclusion and inclusive practices across learning. This chapter contains interviews from parents in Dubai with children identified as having dyslexia. Besides, field notes of the learning support department were gathered together with data collected from school websites and inspection reports for each school in Abu Dhabi.

Using the process of coding from GM and CR, constant comparison of the data in the open coding stages led to categories that were formed to develop the axial coding stage, from which three hypotheses through research questions were formed. These hypotheses were then tested through interviews with nine parents and one parent and daughter who has dyslexia from seven different countries, with the same curriculum schools in Dubai. To protect and respect anonymity and make it easier to identify I have placed a letter A-J next to each parent's identity during my reporting of data.

This chapter discusses how dyslexia is supported and managed in schools, as well as parents' perspectives from the three hypotheses formed in the axial stages of data analysis, which were: parental engagement, effective diagnosis and assessment for dyslexia and teacher training. The chapter also draws on SEN policies and literature with conclusions and proposes implications for how dyslexia is defined, supported and managed in schools and the wider community in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Finally, this chapter ends with how this study contributes to knowledge of dyslexia awareness, dyslexia support and ways to manage dyslexia in education, furthering an important understanding on inconsistencies for supporting dyslexia across schools, how dyslexia manifest itself in Arabic and across languages, as well as the limitations of the study and implications for future research.

Three themes emerged from the initial open coding stage and after the axial stage: first, parental engagement with the respective schools concerning dyslexia; second, difficulties and opportunities with the effective identification and assessment of dyslexia; and third, differences in teacher training towards supporting and managing dyslexia. These three categories informed the hypotheses in terms of the types of 'community of practice' (Wenger,

2000) and the notion of shared community (professionals and parents) and practice (in this instance, supporting dyslexia).

6.2 Overview of Analysis

To summarise the open coding and axial coding a synthesis of the findings from phase one, from which the three key themes emerged. Eight questions addressed parental engagement/ involvement, five questions addressed effective identification and assessing learners with dyslexia and seven questions addressed teacher training and understanding of dyslexia. The questions are listed in Appendix 1. A summary of the research questions, as well as the categories and how CR was used can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: ***A Summary of Selective Coding***

Selective Coding **Parents interviews from Dubai** (Semi-structured interviews) CR (Observed empirical, actual, and real experiences)
3. To what degree are these principles, support, and provisions recognised as similar by parents and children and professionals working within a community of practice? 3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know learning targets and objects are being met?
-All parents reported that they were all actively engaged in supporting their child's dyslexia -All parents reported that this engagement was based on concerns on identification on early detection for dyslexia, supporting dyslexia and the way dyslexia is managed, including monitoring and checking their children's learning progress with their schools -Concerns on inconsistencies of how much support is given with different subject teachers

and the way dyslexia is managed across primary and secondary

-Parents reported that they felt more engaged with teachers in primary compared to secondary teachers when it comes to school engagement and depth of support with their children's dyslexia

-Inconstancies and ineffective approaches on modifying class material and homework to support dyslexia was reported by eight parents

-Inconsistencies with materials and resources, including 'the use of laptops not promoted and little use of tech, or audiobooks, or worksheets' Parent G, interviewed August 2019) to support dyslexia at school.

-More specific awareness of dyslexia and definitions defined within the literature. Reading programs were reported

-The high costs surrounding obtaining an initial authorised assessment for identifying dyslexia

-A lack of funding towards the awareness and support on what dyslexia is and how it can manifest (low self-esteem, Parent B, interviewed 2019) within the community, including directions and guidance for parents towards identifying and supporting dyslexia.

-Funding as a challenge towards inclusion and the community of practice with supporting and managing dyslexia both in schools and the community

-Parents all reported knowledgeable content on defining dyslexia (which linked with literature) on dyslexia, developmental dyslexia (Parent H, Critchley,1968), difficulties with processing information compared to broad definitions from school principals in Abu Dhabi.

- No parents reported that they were asked to be engaged with anyone (Principals, SENCO's, Teachers) from school to collaborate, participate and support with an IEP for

their child's dyslexia.

-Eight parents there is a lack of awareness and understanding towards dyslexia and because 'there is nothing really that parents involved with' (Parent A), which is a challenge towards inclusion and a barrier for supporting dyslexia with teachers, across the curriculum and school.

The parental interview questions are different from the questions asked in Phase One of the open coding and are thematically linked with all three areas probed with the axial stages. These questions are based on the transitional broad process of GM open coding stages, shifting toward a fine focus on the axial and selective coding stages, based on GM a synthesis of insights acquired from key literature relating to these three areas.

My hypothesis for the selective stages is that parents of children identified with dyslexia will report a deeper understanding towards defining dyslexia, the impact of dyslexia in education, provide more comprehensive ways to support and manage dyslexia and a deeper awareness of the practical barriers inside and outside schools that prevent inclusion and inclusive practices across learning.

6.3 Parental Engagement

The interviews with all ten mothers reported that they were actively engaged in supporting their child's dyslexia. However, parents reported different experiences in terms of parental engagement at schools in Dubai. The parental reports indicate that there is evidence that parents are actively involved with supporting dyslexia, which is identified and followed in SEN policies (DfEE, 1997, Green Paper: Excellence for All Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs). In particular, the interview results from parents in Dubai stated that there was an engagement at school. However, this engagement was based on concerns towards the type of support and how dyslexia is identified and managed, which included monitoring and checking their child's learning progress: 'with the school, we have to check everything, this is what I am saying. Unfortunately, in our school, nobody has the experience' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019). Another parent H (interviewed August 2019) also described that

schools were not engaging parents as these might raise concerns from the parents: 'They did not even flag it at school, and I was worried as a parent concerned about her level of learning. I think here teachers don't want to say; they are afraid of alarming parents' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019). The concerns of how awareness and learning have impacted for SEN through not creating environments and communities for inclusion has been highlighted in the literature (Lloyd, 2000, Ainscow 1995, 2011).

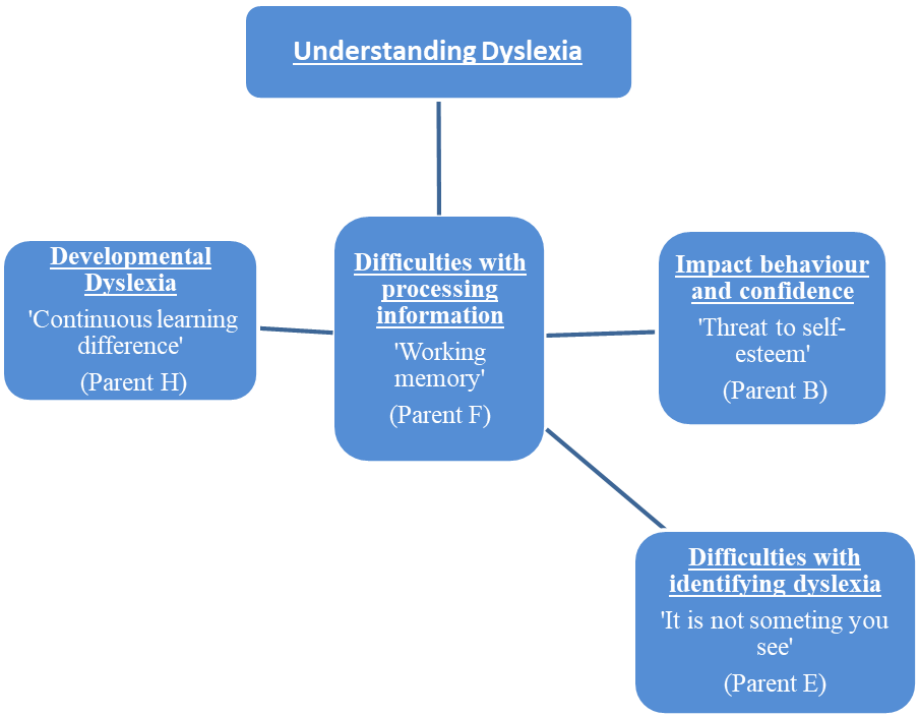
Understanding the kind of support and the responsibility of support was also reported by Parent A (interviewed August 2019), who is a teacher/parent, who taught at the same school of her dyslexic son: 'A study conducted in the school on the children and the effect on how much affect we have on the child's education and we found that we have approximately 10%, very little effect on young kids. We find the most effective is parental engagement, is much better with young kids and it is all about educating parents about the importance of being engaged to support'. Clear inconsistent differences of support reported by parents for dyslexia have been identified also in SEN policy (Special Education Needs and Disability: Towards Inclusive Schools, 2004).

6.4 Parents Understanding of Dyslexia

Significant features of parent responses were that they were more informed and consistent in identifying dyslexia as a 'continuous learning difference' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), with broader awareness that dyslexia includes 'difficulties with reading, working memory' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'phonics' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019) and 'threat to self-esteem' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019). Parents also demonstrated a broader awareness of diagnosis and definitions, together with knowledgeable and practical strategies to support dyslexia with extended responses and strategies towards helping dyslexia, for example, reading programs such as 'Nessy' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019). Parent responses towards defining dyslexia are also reflected in literature and studies of working memory, (Jeffries and Everatt, 2004; Berninger et al., 2008; Baddeley, 1993) placing dyslexia on a continuum of special needs (Riddick, 2001) and dyslexia impacting self-esteem (Kalka and Lockiewicz, 2017; Yu, Zuk and Gaab, 2018). Parent E (interviewed August 2019), also reported that as dyslexia can be perceived as a hidden special educational need at

school, 'they [school] don't understand he is on the spectrum, but with dyslexia, it is not something you see, it is just what the child struggles with'. A summary of how parents understand dyslexia is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: **How Parents Understood Dyslexia**



6.5 Schools Understanding for Dyslexia

Eight parents conveyed that awareness and understanding of dyslexia are barriers in their schools, 'no awareness marking policy in school English Department when the child first started' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019), 'we have big issues with behaviour because my son gets frustrated with reading… I had to tell them what reading program to follow' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'no not very much. There is nothing really that parents are involved with, which is really sad' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019), 'dyslexia support is not promoted, no awareness' (Parent G, interviewed August 2019), 'only one teacher kind of understood' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), 'two years ago when I went to the school teachers new very little' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019)), 'no, no, no, I had to find everything, to be honest, my son was diagnosed for dyslexia 3 years ago, and they [the

school] told me that the school does not really have a team in place' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019), 'in my IB school, in the German school I went to there was no support what so ever, my teacher there never really acknowledged I had dyslexia at all. Sometimes I still get nervous with teachers because of my dyslexia and this frustrates me when I know the answers' (daughter of Parent F, interviewed August 2019).

6.6 Inconsistent Support Across Schools

It could be argued that different parents are experiencing challenges towards inclusion at their child's schools. The challenges of inclusion were reported previously with schools in Abu Dhabi, but contrary parents reported different types of parental engagement were experienced at different times in schools, summarised by the following responses, 'parents are not that much involved really, at grade 5 when my daughter joined the school, there were support and inclusion support with the support team' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'in primary school, meetings with the support team at parent's evenings. Now at secondary, it's me that has to bring up the subject of support, no formal time to discuss it' (Parent G, interviewed August 2019), and 'we got a few recommendations from the report from schools' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'I made the decision. School said no need' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019). Having a lack of guidance at a school level with knowing where to obtain an initial assessment to identify dyslexia can lead to frustration and anxiety, as reported by Parent E (interviewed August 2019), this 'meant my daughter was scared and worried especially she is terrified with assessment'. The separation of parental engagement with supporting dyslexia impacts barriers towards inclusion identified through policies, (National Policy to Empower People of Determination, MoCD, 2019, Removing Barriers to Achievement: The Government's Strategy for SEN Department of Education and Skills, 2004).

It also became clear that there were inconsistencies with when, where, and how much support towards dyslexia was given across the schools in Dubai, 'now my daughter is in secondary; I am not involved anymore. It was different before, in grade 3, around 8 years, old I was involved with teachers' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'in primary meetings, yes, with the support team, weekly, but now in secondary, it's me that has to bring up the subject of support, no formal time to discuss it' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019), 'it is the age of the

children, and in the secondary school, it is very different. The young children we have target intervention and a good support system amongst the junior teachers in my experience' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019) and 'it is a battle to be involved at my son's school. We have to check everything. Unfortunately, in our school, nobody has the experience' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019).

Interestingly, historical and recent SEN policies have placed the importance of equal inclusion in education (Warnock Report, in England, Legislation Pertaining to Special Needs Education, 1996, UNESCO, 2017). However, the gaps within the literature highlight that the progression and funding of what inclusion and provision look like is still inconsistent. For example, in this research parents reported that there were more engagement and dyslexia support for their children in primary than in secondary at the schools, which is not the case across the literature (Hodkinson, 2020, Ekins, 2014, Kurniawati, et al., 2017, Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development & Centre for Educational Research Innovation Content Provider, 2000).

The main findings specifically found from these responses were that there were differences between primary and secondary, with primary being more receptive towards supporting dyslexia once learners were formally identified with dyslexia. Furthermore, nine parents specifically stated that primary teachers were more receptive towards parental engagement, with typical reports reflectively reported by Parent C (interviewed August 2019). 'some do, my son's school does help parents in primary, but secondary is different and not so active' and 'parents are not that much involved really, some at grade 5 when my daughter joined there was a team, but we had to fight to get the support' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019).

Additionally, three parents reported that they felt not engaged in teacher meetings, due to insufficient time allocation and not involved with the decisions on the kinds of support given at school. Parent F, (interviewed August 2019), 'parents are not that much involved really, some at grade 5 when my daughter joined there was a team, but we had to fight to get the support', 'in some areas and subjects, but not with all teachers' (Parent J, interviewed August 2019) and 'if I have contacted them, or sought them out during parents' meetings, then they are receptive. I wouldn't say they are actively contacting myself or daughter about support or achievement' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019). A lack of engagement represses effective

support for dyslexia in-home and across school but importantly hinders any community of engagement, which plays a vital role with effective support (Margolis and Truesdell, 1987). Collecting these responses highlighted the crucial personal and collective understanding and interpretations of inclusion, as well as the challenges and opportunities for the development of inclusive practices across whole schools.

6.7 School Accommodations for Dyslexia Support

Support on modifying class materials and homework was also a theme that emerged from the data gathered from the interviews. Eight parents in Dubai stated that schools were not receptive towards engagement and supporting homework modification for learners with dyslexia. Support and training, particularly with recognising early detection for dyslexia impacts on effective support for dyslexia, which is also reflected significantly in the literature (McKellar, 2010, Rose, 2009, Byrne, 2011) and policy (Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, 2001). Furthermore, eight parents provided insights with challenges of obtaining clear information on how support is communicated, 'support networks, these could be encouraged by the schools. More exist now, but previously, just word of mouth, very ad hoc, (Parent B, interviewed August 2019), 'Constantly having to inform staff, teachers, educate them and suggest approaches to them, school does not provide anything for me' and 'if they adapt any homework, I do not know' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019).

Parent I (interviewed August 2019), also reported that 'nothing was adapted for him and they got very frustrated and lost his confidence when he was not reading'. Parent H (interviewed August 2019), reported that if schools cannot advertise external services, support or assessment for dyslexia, then the responsibility should be through educational branches of the government, 'If the UAE government is worried about ethical breaches then they should create a list, schools with SEND departments, they have a small list on the KHDA website... approved therapy centres, …names of local area community centres, if such a thing exists'. Furthermore, Parent C and Parent H (interviewed August 2019) reported, 'the school does adapt some materials for me, which can help my son, but this is not for all subjects' and only one parent reported, 'thankfully, they don't provide a lot of homework. They understand that the day is very long and challenging enough for him during school hours. They have revised spelling lists, phonics lists; we have decreased words and increased them as his working

memory increases and his sound recognition increases' (Parent J, interviewed August 2019).

Differences in terms of insufficient time given for dyslexia support also varied in schools. Parent E (interviewed August 2019), described that 'the school this year is better, but what I find with the schools here is that they are under-resourced; they have the best intentions, but 15 minutes twice a week does nothing, really nothing'. Parent G (interviewed August 2019), also reported difficulties with inside class support and the problems learners with dyslexia have with meeting educational outcomes from curriculum demands, 'large classes and ranges of learning needs in students, with heavy reading/writing demands of the curriculum, especially now as the element of coursework has disappeared; the arts subjects being deemed less important by the government/ society'. However, Parent A (interviewed August 2019) also reported and offered alternative accommodation to curriculum demands, which 'needs somewhere more visual, somewhere more flexible, not just write essays, but tell the story, act the story. We needed a different type of learning for her'.

Though, Parent E (interviewed August 2019), did offer sympathy towards her school regarding insufficient support staff when the parent had to provide external support for her daughter, 'they are understaffed, but when I say that I have a specialist to come and observe my daughter, they never say no. I feel sorry [for] the teachers, I told the principal of the school that when my specialist comes in to observe'. Insufficient time and resources to support SEN and learners with dyslexia are highlighted by impacting and challenging learners and become barriers towards inclusion (UNESCO, 2017).

6.8 Dyslexia Support in Class

The advantages and disadvantages of in- and outside-class support are also reported in the literature (Morin, 2019), as are the difficulties for parents seeking transparency and understanding about what schools are doing to support learners in policy (Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability, 2011). However, Parent F (interviewed August 2019) reported that exclusive support classes were not necessarily the best option for supporting dyslexia, 'if she would have the support at school and when she was pulled out of French and when she was pulled out of maths for support, then she missed these classes, and we needed to make this up outside. So, we decided to stop

any support from the school to keep her in class, then she did the training outside, which seemed a better way, although we had to pay lots of money, it wasn't conflicting in the school'.

Parent B (interviewed August 2019) also responded that being pulled out of class subsequently mean that her son refuses any support, as this led to a perception of being different from others in the class, 'at school, he does not get any support; he refuses it…he does not want to be different, stand out and be labelled, he does not want anyone to point at him and make him feel different to any other child in the room'.

6.9 Learning Resources to Support Dyslexia

The theme of inconsistent engagement with support for dyslexia available (Thomas, Walker and Webb, 1998) and how support was given was also reported through the interviews. Parental engagement towards necessary resources of support, according to SEN policy, is an essential ingredient for inclusion (DfE's Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability, 2011b; the Lamb Inquiry, 2009). Two parents (Parent G and Parent A, interviewed August 2019) also informed the types of resources that they would like to see increased to support dyslexia: 'use of laptops not promoted and little use of tech, or audiobooks, or worksheets, etc. provided in digital form' and also materials that were not adapted, 'still very much paper and pen and worksheet filled in by hand'.

The link between dyslexia, expectations, and lack of awareness towards extended work being modified to address learners' abilities and creative strengths inside/outside school was also reported by two parents (Parent G, Parent A, interviewed August 2019) through the 'expectation, understanding, awareness about how variation in homework and presentation of work can make a massive impact', 'delivery of content, use of colour, technology, audiobooks, video example'. However, Parent H (interviewed August 2019) stated that her daughters' school 'have provided some names of some apps that help', but support was still quite limited. Though, two parents (Parent B, Parent D, interviewed August 2019) reported a sense of loneliness, 'sadly, no one ever hands you a handbook of websites, resources, clinics and support groups. It's taken me years to learn where to go, who to talk to, what websites are better for assisting teaching and understanding', 'continually having to educate myself,

seek out information, inform teachers, raise the profile, look at factors for examinations'.

Parent B and Parent G (interviewed August 2019) also described that dyslexia accommodations were not reflected in homework, 'school does not provide anything for me and if they adapt any homework, I do not know', while 'nothing was adapted for him and they got very frustrated and lost his confidence when he was not reading', underpinning agreement in the problems raised in both national and international policies on SEN in education (Special education needs and disability: Towards inclusive schools, 2004; Conference on Special Needs Education, Salamanca Spain, 1994). Learning a mandatory language with dyslexia was also raised as a concern (Parent G, interviewed August 2019) conveying that 'Arabic is on the curriculum and it can be hard for children with dyslexia to learn another language on top of this'. It is, therefore, essential for assessors to be working with all staff to review learners whom they suspect as having barriers to learn effectively.

6.9.1 Funding to Support Dyslexia

Key interview responses on funding and differences on the type and how much support was also considered a barrier for inclusion by parents. Parent H (interviewed August 2019) stated that engagement meant by paying for a 'shadow teacher in class at an additional cost to us'. Although no parents testified issues with the high cost of obtaining an official educational, psychological assessment to diagnose dyslexia, they did report that this may be the financial burden for some parents, 'I knew it had to be done, so I have now done it twice, but yes, cost is a big factor, and I can see how some parents couldn't afford it' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019), 'so expensive, and some people just cannot afford it and also the extra classes outside' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019). However, Parent F (interviewed August 2019) offered an alternative perspective from another country, 'in Germany, it was free, not like here. We took her to a special institute to get assessed. They offer free assessments, and they don't get the money then but get money when the training starts'.

Other challenges affecting parental engagement reported by parents were funding and transparency on how support is given. Although cost was not a factor for obtaining an initial diagnosis for dyslexia, all parents interviewed did report that the formal assessment for dyslexia was expensive and difficult to obtain and this was a challenge for some parents.

These were a summary of the responses from the parents, 'with all the huge amount of money we paid, and she was behind a year, and we needed the support' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'wasn't a factor to us, to be honest with you, but for a lot of parents in our school it is' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019) and 'so expensive and some people just cannot afford it and also the extra classes outside' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019). The impact of cost and not getting assessments may drive the decision not to obtain an assessment, which was reported by Parent B (interviewed August 2019), 'I think if the assessment were not so horribly expensive then parents, especially in Dubai, parents might be more willing to get it done'.

Parents J, Parent B and Parent F (interviewed August 2019) also stated that as dyslexia can be placed on a continuum (Reid, 2012; Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2003) and often, different diagnoses are sought, 'we did the two tests here, another one for extra time when I was in grade 9', 'an assessment every two years for support' and 'externally assessed three times, in Germany, not Tokyo, no we thought it was the language, but in Germany, with her mother tongue, we realised with her spelling and numbers'.

Parent C (interviewed August 2019) also reported international differences in obtaining financial support from the government and local authority, 'It works very different than the UK. In the UK, some of the costs can be offset by local educational authorities. Over here, any formal assessment costs are met by parents'. Six parents reported being as typical of the responses Parent D conveyed to be 'shocked and upset' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019), and three parents (Parent A, C and F, interviewed August 2019) reported being 'not sure what to do next' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019), while and Parent I (interviewed August 2019) reported being 'relieved' when receiving the diagnosis of dyslexia from their child's assessment. The daughter interviewed with Parent F (interviewed August 2019) reported a sense of self-actualisation once she received the information from the assessment, 'for me, once I realised I was dyslexic, it made sense to me, and I started to understand why I couldn't read very well and not understand what I was reading. When I found out, I thought it is OK, and dyslexia provided me with a reason and a logical explanation'. With the cost of obtaining a diagnosis, these diagnoses must include an element for counselling parents and learners, as this is normally a beginning point for some parents to understand dyslexia.
All parents reported that cost was not a factor regarding obtaining an assessment for dyslexia.

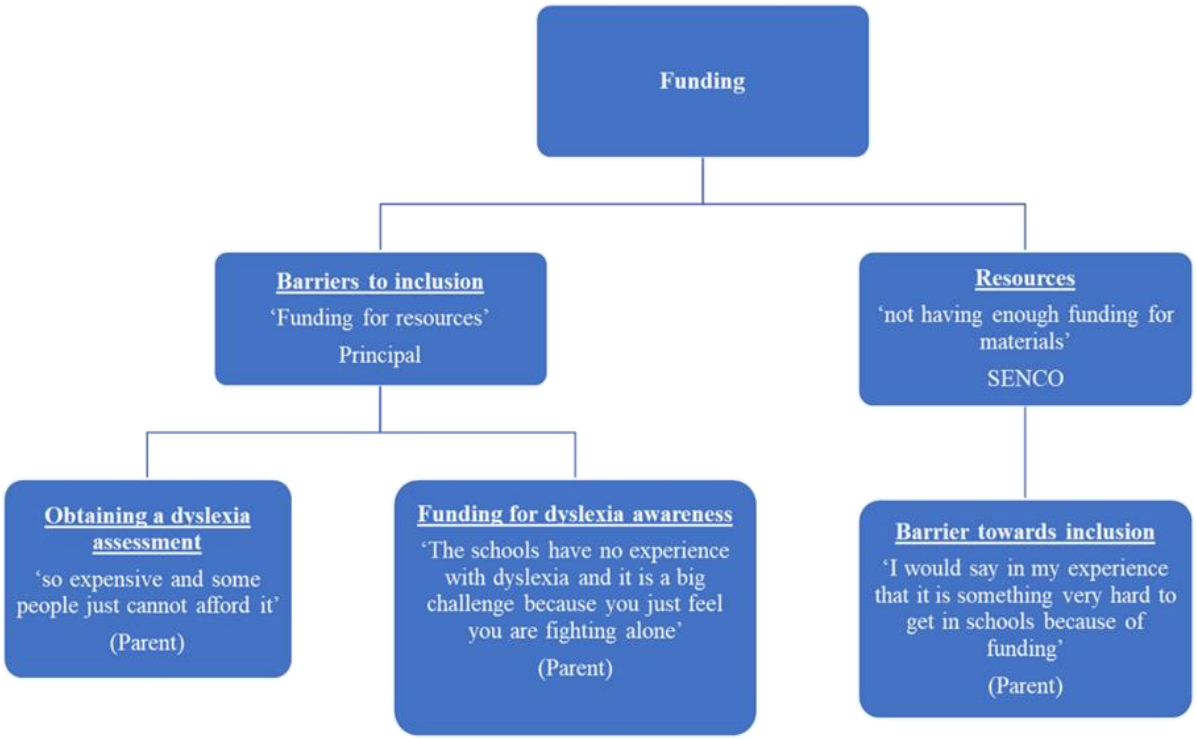
However, according to all parents, the costs were high, and this could be a factor for some parents not having the financial means to obtain one or to continually update existing assessments, 'no, not for us. I really find it sad and strange that this might be an impact for other students; for us, we can afford help and assessments' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'It is expensive, we were lucky that our insurance covered it, yes but it is so expensive 3900 [UAE Dirhams] about, some people cannot afford it' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'wasn't a factor to us, to be honest with you, but for a lot of parents in our school it is' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019), 'It was not easy to get an assessment for me, and it was really expensive and unfortunately, after all this cost I paid for the report' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019).

However, on receiving information on the diagnosis regarding their child's dyslexia assessment from the educational psychologist, all parents reported that their response was to hand the information to the school. Six parents reported that they had arranged meetings with schools and that schools responded in the following ways: by adding dyslexia to their child's IEP and adding class support and one-on-one support. However, four parents reported that schools were ineffective towards support and follow-up, with one of the four parents reporting that they pay for external one-to-one support and Parent B (interviewed August 2019) stated that they are having to pay 'almost double [school fees] to get extra school support and teacher'. As discussed in the literature, the cost of diagnoses is often placed with the parents (Gulf News, 2014; Macdonald and Deacon, 2019). However, governments can provide financial assistance and support for resources for individuals with dyslexia, which does not happen with the deregulation of private/international schools in the UAE. Funding is inconsistently different (Vlachou, 1997), which is reflected through national and international SEN policies. Unclear funding reported by parents can produce misalignment, confusion, and subsequently, a failure of spending towards any policy objectives (OECD, 2017).

Funding and continuing costs for support and diagnoses from parents and schools were also significantly reported as a challenge towards inclusion, 'here we don't have any of that and some of those assessments and discussions are quite pricey. Getting an assessment can cost up to 5000 dirhams and sometimes that is a barrier for parents to do that, the cost is too high' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019) and 'yes, cost is a big factor, and I can see how some parents couldn't afford it' (Parent G, interviewed August 2019).

A summary of contributing funding concerns, which act as barriers towards inclusion is presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: **Overview of Funding Issues**



6.9.2 Cultural Differences and Dyslexia Support

All parents reported differences when it came to dyslexia support and accommodations towards learning for their children at their schools. It is important to note, that all schools in this research used English as the main language of instruction and this may be a cause for ineffective support for those learners whose English is not their first language. Of the 9 parents and one daughter interviewed, 3 parents were from England and one from Ireland, the remaining 6 parents of children who have been identified with dyslexia English was not their first language. This is an important consideration towards identifying and supporting dyslexia across languages and cultures.

One central importance and influential consideration are that reading acquisition and dyslexia is the particular orthography that the child is acquiring and there are considerable variations

across languages (Landeri et al., 2013). English has been identified as a considerably difficult language to learn, due particularly to the opaque complex and inconsistent nature of orthographic symbols that represent the sounds of irregular spellings and one-to-one correspondences between graphemes and phonemes. Studies and research across different languages have shown that transparent orthographies with reliable high-symbol sounds are learned and acquired easier than opaque languages for example English when compared to transparent languages.

However, Arabic, which is compulsory to learn in the UAE for all children is a complex mix of transparent/opaque continuum is not straightforward (Saiegh-Haddad and Henkin-Roitfarb, 2014). More research and considerations towards understanding how dyslexia manifests itself within and across cultures and languages, particularly amongst international schools where English is the main language of instruction is significantly underrepresented. The impact towards identifying dyslexia is underestimated when considering learners whose English is not their first language and where English is used for teaching, and instrumental for assessing learning and testing.

6.9.3 Effective Identification and Assessing for Dyslexia

All parents reported difficulties with diagnosis and obtaining an assessment for dyslexia (in interview question nine). All parents reported that early identification for dyslexia was completed outside the school by an educational psychologist at an early age for their children, and this was important and effective for identifying dyslexia. Furthermore, all parents reported that the decision to obtain an external assessment for dyslexia was not based on information from their school, and they did 'not flag it up at school' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019). The following responses summarise what the parents reported regarding early signs, symptoms, and parents' intuition and understanding of dyslexia, 'I knew some signs and thought that I could see his progress slow down and he would decode everything, and he would give it to me as he wanted to enjoy someone reading to him' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019), 'externally assessed; school did not say anything. I feel something is wrong' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019), 'everyone is so 'PC' [politically correct] these day's not willing to say anything that might offend, or offer guidance in case they are seen as crossing an ethical line, BUT as a parent we need direction, we need to know who to call, what places

have had success, who are the con-artists to stay away from' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019).

A summary of the parents' responses that schools did not identify dyslexia, and these can be best summarised in the following replies, 'school did not say anything. I felt something was wrong; my teachers only told me that your child needs to do more homework' (Parents A, interviewed August 2019), 'I picked it up early, and luckily, I knew some signs' (Parents B interviewed August 2019), 'I made the decision' (Parents D, interviewed August 2019) 'the schools did not pick it up early at all, even when I asked the teachers' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019), 'the teachers were saying it was fine although we knew something was not right', 'the school did not pick up my son…when he was nine' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019) The early symptoms and not recognising or diagnosing dyslexia was also reported by one parent in Dubai, 'in the second year the teacher was afraid to take responsibility for the learning, as it turned out that she also has auditory learning processing disorder problems, so in class, if you would read out a question to her, out of the five words, she would only hear three' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019).

However, parents also reported difficulties with obtaining an educational psychologist to diagnose dyslexia in Dubai, due to not having adequate information about where to look and recommendations of whom to see. Schools are not allowed to advertise for external assessors. Parents also reported that the school provided information and a recommendation about where to get an assessment, although schools were cautious, as 'the schools here cannot ethically give recommendations, and the assessments and experiences are different depending on where you go' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019), 'no, it is very difficult to find a good one, someone you trust' (Parents D, interviewed August 2019), 'schools perhaps have a shortlist of trusted clinics, though I know if they 'aren't allowed' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), 'to recommend places, however, someone has to give direction, a small push a start' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'it's a minefield. You need to start somewhere' (Parent J, interviewed August 2019).

All ten mothers reported that their suspicions were confirmed by the diagnoses about their child's dyslexia and three parents reported being upset, due to not knowing what to do next. Besides, six parents reported that once they received the dyslexia diagnoses they were

'shocked and upset' (Parent G, interviewed August 2019), with three more parents reporting that at the time they were 'not sure what to do next' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), 'lost what to do next' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019), 'not sure who to contact in Dubai' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019). The following extended report was typical of the responses received, 'some parents in my experience almost go through a kind of grieving process if you like, what will this mean for my child, what won't they be able to do'. 'of course, we have to help what dyslexia is and that this is going to be just one part of a much bigger puzzle for a child. And maybe that this part might be that it maybe means down the line that progressions might look different' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019). As Parent, I (interviewed August 2019) stated that assessments identifying dyslexia is not enough if schools do not effectively understand how to support dyslexia 'without specialists in the UAE in dyslexia we cannot do anything with these reports' and 'if schools could make it less frightening for parents' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019) when obtaining information leading towards identifying dyslexia in learners. Having easy access and obtaining an assessment is vitally important towards supporting dyslexia (Shaywitz, 2005; Snowling and Hulme, 1996; Schatschneider and Torgesen, 2004).

6.9.4 Dyslexia Awareness and Guidance

All parents also reported frustrations with money spent and the lack of awareness on information and resources available for dyslexia, which can be summarised by the following statements, 'countless hours and money spent on studying courses re-teaching dyslexic children, phonics, understanding the brain, how it works, extra books, appointments trying different counsellors, psychologists, and so on' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), 'after several years of struggling on my own, I have learned a lot about dyslexia' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'the schools have no experience with dyslexia, and it is a big challenge because you just feel you are fighting alone. I have been in the UAE, Dubai, a very long time, almost eleven years' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'in this country people don't understand that she is like any other child…and I tell my friends it is not a disease' (Parent A, interviewed August 2019).

Parents also reported that the main learning barriers for children with dyslexia at schools and in education were: 'misunderstanding' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019), 'no

support' (Parent J, interviewed August 2019), 'identifying learning strategies' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'teachers not knowing what dyslexia is' (Parent B, (August 2019), and 'no clear support networks in and out of school to support parents and Children with dyslexia' (Parent G, interviewed August 2019). Parent F (interviewed August 2019) reported that one major barrier for her was 'misinformation' about dyslexia in the school and another response typified the parent's responses: 'The schools have no experience with dyslexia, and it is a big challenge because you just feel you are fighting alone' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), while another parent reported, 'effective identification and assessment' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019) as being the biggest challenge parents face (interview question eight). Parent E (August, interviewed 2019) summarised the views of all parents in the following: What I feel at the moment is that they really do not understand dyslexia and I tell my daughter that when you have dyslexia you are different but different is good, and that is actually what the world is looking for… people that don't think the same, they need people that think differently, as the world evolves and you're one of these people. I think that changing the perception, and because dyslexia is not a physical disability, you don't see it, and we really don't get the difficulties parents have'.

It was suggested there should be a 'book, what dyslexia is and what it's not...places to get help...web sites that help for further education and support learning tools, assistive packages and web resources ….should their school be bad at it…I'm sure this exists, but I haven't seen it' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019). Given the costs involved with obtaining assessments, materials/resources and support for dyslexia that parents must pay for support inside and outside the class, principals did not report how provision and funding are used at their schools. The UAE national policy (2019), which highlights 'educational assistance to all educational institutions that wish to receive people with special needs, considers requests for funding for the equipment and technologies', but does not indicate what the amount should be or how this can be used. Some schools are presented with a challenge based on limited resources, and as SEN is not the only concern for schools funding becomes a challenge. However, if schools are serious about inclusion then schools have a responsibility to guide parents towards clear inclusive values, that are meaningful, sustainable, practical and shared with parents. Besides, schools need to provide transparent information on how they fund SEN and provide an inclusive framework, which includes opportunities for all the stakeholders and parental engagement.

It is evident from the issues concerning dyslexia that a resource centre could address engagement for all stakeholders by providing access to resources, materials, awareness and information to parents and schools.

6.9.5 Inclusion and Inclusive Practices

Addressing the question of what needs to be done concerning the way schools combine inclusion and supporting learners with dyslexia, parents reported the following: more dyslexia understanding towards support for teachers; engagement and communication between staff, departments and parents; and the use of technology and awareness. Parent E (interviewed, August 2019) reported that understanding dyslexia for schools in Dubai in the past was a barrier towards entering education, 'What I realise is that five years ago, you wouldn't even dare tell a school that your child had problems with fine motor skills because your child would be rejected, let alone with dyslexia'. Another parent reported that through her own understanding of dyslexia with her daughter she now values inclusion in society, 'if parents are aware of dyslexia then society has to accept them, adopt them, even if they are not my kids I can now accept these kids' (Parent A, August 2019).

However, Parent E (August 2019) reported that inclusion is being pushed by the educational branch of the Dubai government, Knowledge and Human Development (KHDA), 'nowadays, because of the KHDA they are pushing inclusive and kids into schools, but they do not know what to do with the kids and that they just have to show that they have the kids, they are not actually doing much, I would say all schools, some of them are good, and they are doing well with their inclusion team. However, the big problem is that they are under-resourced and being under-resourced is a big issue'.

6.9.6 Barriers Towards Inclusion

Addressing whether parents believe that their school was inclusive towards the needs of dyslexia, what needs to be done, and what the barriers that challenge inclusion (interview question four, six and seven) have resulted in the majority of 50% of the parents reported that their school is not inclusive towards supporting dyslexia, with 20% of parents reporting that only parts of their schools were inclusive and 30% of parents yes that their schools were

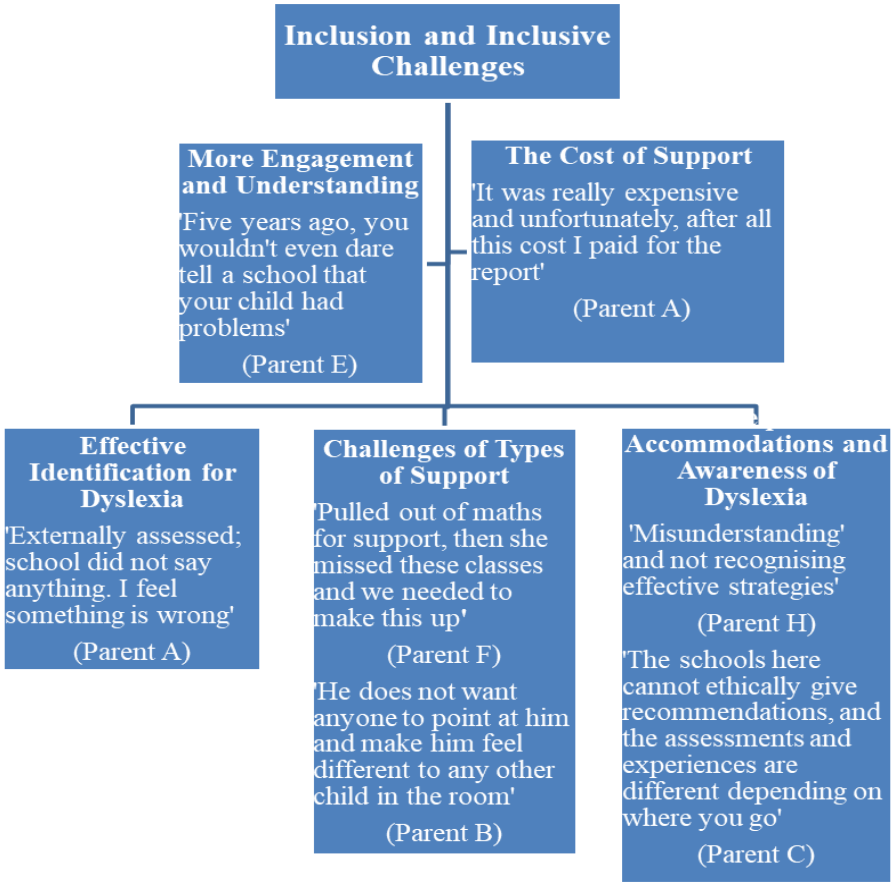
supporting and inclusive towards dyslexia.

The reasons reported why their schools were not inclusive towards the needs of dyslexia were as follows: not understanding dyslexia, schools limiting options and opportunities for learning in education for learners with dyslexia; no/inadequate classroom or teaching adaptation; staff perceptions of dyslexia training; funding towards support; and ineffective links for support between parents and staff. Parent H (interviewed August 2019) reported 'misunderstanding' and not recognising effective strategies was also reported to support dyslexia, 'identifying learning strategies' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019). Parents who agreed that their school is inclusive provided the following responses, 'this year, yes, we have an amazing teacher' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019), 'it is a non-selective school, so that is good, but much more could be done' (Parent D, interviewed August 2019), 'my son's school is not holding the badge for dyslexia-friendly school, but some of the teachers have a good mindset which is reflective in their practice to help my son' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019). Moreover, there was often a disconnect and distrust between parents and their corresponding schools regarding the provision and parents reported that they 'have to check everything' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019).

Parent D (interviewed August 2019) reported there is difficulty with obtaining information about what support is given at school 'had looked on web site previously for information but did not find anything.' Parents B and Parent F (interviewed August 2019) responded that their school was partially inclusive towards the needs of dyslexia, 'Sometimes, my son feels that he is coping at the moment', and the daughter who has dyslexia responded, 'Now we have an inclusion program which works quite well with some teachers'. Parent H (interviewed August 2019) also highlighted the challenges of inclusion and changing the culture of schools and society, 'I know they're trying to be inclusive by 2019—but is that reality especially in the bigger schools where there are thousands of students and huge cultural barriers….personally it's taken over three years to know what I know, but that's a wasted three years he could have had the help and been on his way'.

A summary of the inclusion and inclusive challenges reported by parents is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6**: Learning Barriers for Dyslexia at School**



6.9.7 Teacher Training

Other valid information reported from parents was how teachers perceive understanding of and support for dyslexia in their schools. Seven of the nine parents interviewed reported that their children's teachers did not understand. Parents reported that teachers did not 'really 'understand' (Parent F, Parent H, interviewed August 2019). Furthermore, Parent F and her daughter with dyslexia (interviewed August 2019) reported 'some teachers would say your child doesn't really have any problems and that she is very lazy and that she is dumb a little bit and very slow' and this was difficult for me and as mum, and when several teachers keep telling you like this, then you think there is really something wrong or a big problem'. Other parents reported that teachers 'don't have the experience or qualifications' (Parent B, Parent A and Parent E, interviewed August 2019).

All ten mothers reported that they felt that teachers and learning support teachers did not

obtain any appropriate qualifications and experience to support dyslexia. Parent H (interviewed August 2019) responded that the learning support teacher does have 'lots of experience and a master's in special education', while Parent E (interviewed August 2019) reported, 'I know very little is taught in PGCE and B.Ed. I hope that is improving. I myself, as a teacher, had none. I do know that some training is given at schools now; how much, I don't know. My experience, talking to teachers, is that they do not know very much. I recently led a PD training at my place of work. No teachers had received any training in dyslexia', 'shadow teachers and other training centres in Dubai didn't seem to use the other teaching approaches that are advertised as 'secrets to dyslexia success' such as the Orton-Gillingham (1) method' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019). One parent identified the challenges towards understanding and providing the necessary accommodations: 'The main teachers in the class are not qualified for dyslexia, I think the teachers once they have read the report, they find it difficult to differentiate, and although once in her class, she had ten kids with learning needs, and I understand you cannot differentiate with ten kids in the class' (Parent E, interviewed August 2019).

However, being differently treated in schools by being identified as having dyslexia was also reported by Parent F and daughter (interviewed August 2019) also expressed being treated dissimilar to other student and the negative impact of it can have on self-esteem, 'I have had this before when the teacher acts very different to me that the other students because I was dyslexic and I was not much different to other children, but I felt this and then also the other students also see this difference, and I got teased because I was treated differently'.

However, Parent B (interviewed August 2019) reported optimistically that inclusion and training, as is often the case with inclusion, is varied and takes time, based on experience, which is also reflected in the literature (Reid, 2013): 'if teachers have taught children with dyslexia, they have the experience, and it takes time, and the schools need to support it. It is no good having pockets of greatness in schools' and 'a teacher who doesn't jump on board with understanding dyslexia and instead just stands in front of the class and just give instructions then there learning will simply spiral out of control'. Parent F (interviewed August 2019) also reported that the community has a responsibility 'to learn about dyslexia and I know of my friends who have dyslexia... they also tell me that [they are] not treated in the right way with their disabilities'.

Special school resources and a resources centre, training for teachers, parents, and the wider community were also reported as ways they would like schools and the wider community to support learners with dyslexia. Parent H (interviewed August 2019) reported that UAE government should take responsibility by leading awareness and transparency with dyslexia and support in schools, 'if the UAE government is worried about ethical breaches, then they should create a list, with schools with SEN departments. Parent F and daughter reported (interviewed August 2019) on another impact of inclusion, which is the retention of teachers. There is a perception of teachers from outside the UAE having better experience and qualifications for dyslexia support in her international school: 'they need awareness; actually, the teachers, the society as a whole, there is no awareness many teachers don't know what dyslexia is… every semester… a new year a new teacher, even from the UK, they still don't know what dyslexia is'.

A lack of clear understanding from teachers can be best summed up by the following three collective responses, 'it comes down to teachers, really… need to understand that not everyone is the same and they should understand that we can do the same as everyone else, but also have different needs. They need to respect all [learners] but also see what they can and what they can't do' (daughter of Parent F, interviewed August 2019), 'they don't really understand dyslexia and know what to do and when they find out they don't really know what support to offer and this is the main problem teachers face, some of them feel bad that they don't really understand dyslexia and the problems a child face'. One daughter with Parent F (interviewed August 2019) reported: 'I used to have a problem that when I read a question, I thought I understood it and I would misunderstand it and now with extra time can help with written assessments.' They don't want to be rude to a child, but they just don't know what to do' (Parent C, interviewed August 2019), 'two ways schools see dyslexia, either as a complete disability, the child is not capable to learn, or they ignore it completely', 'before in my German school, the teacher completely ignored that I had dyslexia and scolded me that I couldn't read or write correctly' (Parent F, interviewed August 2019).

Teachers who have inadequate training for children who have dyslexia are prevented and challenged by effective inclusion (Suze et al., 2017) and also challenged with different types of support and provisions in school (Morin, 2019). One parent (J, interviewed August 2019) reported that she would like teachers to understand that 'children [with dyslexia] aren't stupid,

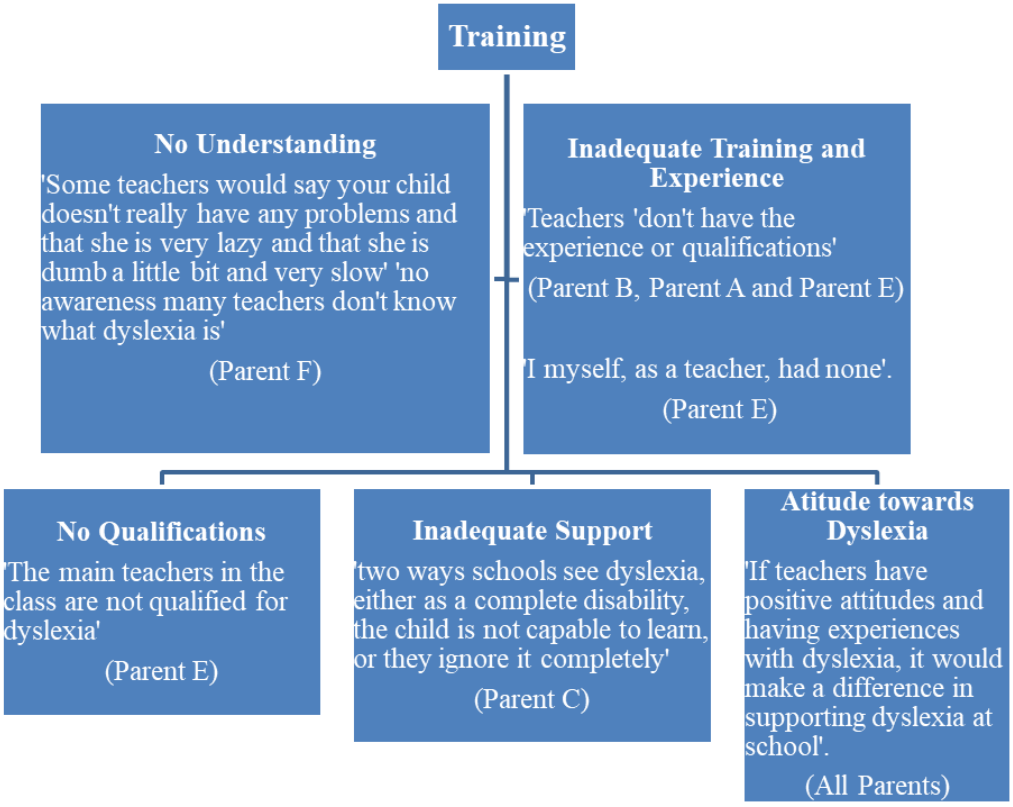
just that they are learning in a different way and other strengths and kids have other talents and these come out later, but don't always show when your kids are young. This is why after school clubs are important to give children different opportunities to learn' (Parent I, interviewed August 2019).

The challenge of providing both effective support and the amount of support for dyslexia in class was also reported by the daughter of Parent F (interviewed August 2019), 'I found that they were too [many] privileges for support, which I found not necessary, in a way that for example in my Arabic lesson the teacher would not mark me down on the spelling too much, he would end up translating every question and word for me which I found quite extreme'.

However, all ten mothers and one daughter reported that if teachers have positive attitudes and having experiences with dyslexia, it would make a difference in supporting dyslexia at school. Parent I (interviewed August 2019) also conveyed what they would like to see to improve support in schools and the wider community, with better awareness and understanding of dyslexia at school, 'Dyslexia teachers, I don't think they need more than that. I just think they need teachers to teach them the right way. They need the right tools to learn. Unfortunately, in Dubai, we don't have this'.

Another two mothers also reported that initial attitudes towards dyslexia must involve inclusive practice by teachers, which can take time to be effectively implemented, 'yes, if he doesn't have a teacher who doesn't jump on board with understanding dyslexia and the strategies towards learning and instead just stand at the front of the class and talk to children then or expect what children do and that is not just going to work' and 'need to give the teacher a chance to adapt and no quick fix' (Parent B, interviewed August 2019), 'a cultural lack of understanding that having a learning difference isn't a bad thing and that people learn differently and that there is nothing wrong with that. You just have to persevere and find the way the light bulb goes on for your child' (Parent H, interviewed August 2019). The way teachers and schools understand dyslexia will have a direct impact on how they support, manage and attitudes of awareness (Topping and Maloney, 2005). A summary of the inconsistencies and inadequate training issues surrounding schools reported by parents is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: **Teacher Training**



Chapter Seven

Limitations, Conclusions and Implications

7.1 Introduction

In this concluding section, after reviewing and analysing the data collected using the GM deductive approach and reflective open coding approach by starting with a hypothesis of how dyslexia is supported and managed in schools. Data was gathered and analysed from the literature review, school inspection reports and school websites (open coding), interviews with school principals, SENCOs and SEN teacher, memos and field notes (axial coding) in Abu Dhabi and interviews with parents (selective coding) in Dubai I will start with the limitations of the study before presenting the conclusions and implications of my study.

7.2 Limitations of the Present Study

I have noticed two focal limitations of the present research. First, with a significant number of international schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai offering the most popular curricula in the UAE my research only focused on 5 schools and this cannot be representative to all schools and reflective of inclusion and inclusive practices. Moreover, inclusion, as discussed in the literature can be a slow, frustrating process and the practices and support may change over time; thus, I cannot base conclusive claims that the data results are fixed. Instead, my tentative findings can illuminate GM as a research approach for providing data, coding, categories and subsequently a hypothesis to test with another group and even the same group over time to seek information on the process of inclusion and dyslexia support.

Additionally, drawing on the theories of critical realism, my findings can assist in identifying and attempting to explain what Bhaskar (2008) refers to as 'intransitivity' and 'transitivity' forms of 'underlying structures and mechanisms that generate powers within subject matter' (McLachlan and Garcia, 2015, p.197). In this sense, holding the macro lens of SEN policy, with the micro lens of how inclusion and inclusive practice are reported in schools and with stakeholders can identify how dyslexia is defined, socially constructed, and supported within the community of practice. The reason that I used CR to supplement GM, rather than a direct approach to this research is that I did not want to fully claim a philosophical position of being

assumptions and absolute beliefs when it came to defining, supporting, and managing dyslexia, as doings so would highlight a weakness of placing superiority on CR. In contrast, CR provided a critical and valid approach to exploring social provisions, which are part of the paradigms (Mingers, 2001). Using a CR approach critically explores how dyslexia is defined, supported, and placed within a paradigm shift towards inclusion in schools and society. In CR, transitive and intransitive areas of knowledge form a stratified ontological viewpoint, which has three domains, the real, the actual, and the empirical (Bhaskar, 2008, 2015). These provide vital perspectives' in my research, which can help us explore, identify and gain different realities of understanding, supporting dyslexia, and how people interpret and interact with SEN policy for inclusion. Determining causal mechanisms and structures of real policies and values on SEN that exist on school websites/ school inspection reports and comparing these values amongst the participants' responses provides critical data on what is preventing schools from moving forward with inclusion in and across schools and within communities.

Furthermore, using CR can assist GM to further explore inclusion by testing the hypothesis to further larger-scale investigations in other countries that also follow models of inclusion within and across educational institutions. Although ideally, this study would have been more extensive by interviewing other schools, mainstream teachers who also teach learners with dyslexia to gain more insight into how they support or modify their practice, accessing schools and key stakeholders can be a challenge due to the sensitivity of research in schools in the UAE. However, I did feel that my research aims were met, providing more general knowledge to stakeholders in the UAE with children identified as having dyslexia and also placing my research within the debate of inclusion and inclusive practice in international education.

The second limitation was that I knew I would be directed by audio transcription from the interviews I conducted. Although transcription from audio proved central to the process of understanding the interview data and developing codes and categories, I believe video recording, particularly if possible, the SEN departments and classrooms would have also provided me with a better understanding on supporting resources available. Moreover, videoing the interviews may have also provided an opportunity to draw out non-verbal cues that would have added more when writing up my field notes after the interviews. Also,

videoing the SEN departments/classroom would have helped significantly, as writing field notes and remembering everything within a tour of the school proved challenging. As a researcher, my observations and field notes are subjective, and as the school knew I was coming, the participants may have had time to prepare what they thought I wanted to hear and see, thus impacting reliability on my data.

7.3 Conclusions

In this section, I offer conclusions stemming from the GM research approach using interviews, field notes, and school inspection reports from Abu Dhabi. The quality of my research design and the methods I selected as a researcher provided a package of research tools through the clear step-by-step GM coding approach towards obtaining and analysing data. A GM provided a clear legitimate and systematic approach to obtaining rich data, which formed categories of knowledge from the relationships of how dyslexia is placed, supported, and managed amongst people, educational institutions, communities, and society (Hayhoe, 2020). These included coexisting data collection, constant comparative analysis, theoretical sampling and memo-ing, all of which created valid and reliable grounds for an appreciation of a scientific approach and promoted quality, and ethical standards towards my data. The three main research questions were:

1. What principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia are there in different curricula in international schools (British, American, International Baccalaureate, Indian and UAE national mixed curriculum school) in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
1a. To what degree is there any disconnect between important stakeholders and parents' knowledge, and between a lack of power over the way relationships are formed between schools and parents, and the opportunities for support inside and outside of the school?
2. How can an effective community of practice be established in Abu Dhabi to support learners with dyslexia?
2a. How effective is parental engagement in education after teachers are told of learners' diagnoses?
3. To what degree are these principles, support, and provisions for dyslexia and community of practice for parents of children with dyslexia in Dubai are similar or different?
3a. Do parents engage and collaborate in planning IEP targets and how do parents know

learning targets and objects are being met?

My conclusions on the three themes will be a synthesis of the results from parent interviews in Dubai, as well as the school staff interviews, field notes and school inspection reports from the schools in Abu Dhabi.

7.4 Parental Engagement

Addressing research question 3, one noticeable finding was that parents reported difficulty finding an educational psychologist to identify dyslexia and write an official educational assessment both in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Moreover, five parents reported that because of being disengaged on the progress of their child's learning at school they waited to return to their own country before getting their child officially assessed and identified for having dyslexia (research question 1a and 3a). Inconsistencies were identified between the depth of knowledge of dyslexia parents knew about dyslexia and more broad general definitions reflected with principals and teachers understanding of dyslexia. Although, there is no doubt that historical national and international policies on SEN (1994, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs, Removing barriers to achievement, 2004, The Lamb Inquiry, 2009) clearly underline the importance of early detection, parental involvement and engagement for continuous effective inclusion my research results show inconsistency between participants, within and across schools.

Surprisingly, parent's knowledge is rarely sought with teachers when support for dyslexia at school is considered (research questions 1a, 2a and 3a). Creating an effective IEP for teachers and parents is essential for effective support and also evidence of whether learning targets are being achieved (Lee-Tarver, 2006). An IEP has no supportive value if it is not created and invetsed by all people who support learning. Additionally, IEP’s have equally less importance and effectiveness if there is no accountability on whether or how dyslexia is being supported across teachers and school. It is noticeable here that response to intervention for the principals and SENCOs/SEN teacher was to wait for the outcome from a 'specialist teacher' or an official external assessment, rather than proactively engage and discuss barriers to learning with parents, which is in contrast to the promotion of engagement from national and international SEN policies (research questions 3). Could principals, SENCOs/SEN teachers,

and parents become part of a provisional 'task force' to address and engage any concerns while waiting for an assessment to be completed? Parents reported they had noticed learning obstacles before an assessment outcome confirmed their intuition (research question 2). Could also an initial free screening tool for early detection for dyslexia be used to address any emerging signs of dyslexia before waiting for the formal diagnoses be offered in schools (research question 2). I feel that it would be better to treat the signs rather than wait for the learning obstacles and barriers that prevent learners with dyslexia from accessing any curriculum.

7.5 Perceptions for Inclusion

Addressing research question 1, principals and SENCOs/SEN teacher reported values of inclusion that are reflected in SEN policies. Also, the participants recognised that these beliefs were a significant challenge to reach inclusion in their schools, which highlights the contrary view in international SEN policy (The international policy of UNESCO (2017) and the values of the UAE government decided to make all schools fully inclusive in Dubai (2020, KHDA) and Abu Dhabi (2024, Department of Education).

The challenges that prevent inclusion for schools according to principals were inconsistency with funding dyslexia support, lack of expertise, teachers not effective with understanding dyslexia, and the parent's perception of openness when it comes to dyslexia (research question 2). Parents, in contrast to the school principal's reports, noted that there were no clear support networks in and out of school to support parents and children with dyslexia (research question 2, 3, 1a, 2a). It is surprising, therefore, that school leadership does not place more importance on engagement task forces to manage better the promotion of dyslexia, actively advocate reflection amongst their staff and the wider community of parents. This lack of active transparency of sharing information was also evident in school inspection reports, which must assist with understanding, awareness, and inclusion as a whole and provide parents choices about provision for SEN.

Without consistency, a shared belief vision and practical accountable steps of what inclusion should be in and across schools then the transition towards inclusion will be misguided and ineffective (Reid, 2012). Furthermore, any transformational and sustainable ‘lever of change’

(Ainscow, 2005) towards inclusion school leadership, all school staff, including parents and government need to continuously reflect and find workable ways to journey together towards inclusion. Moreover, it is surprising that in mandatory school inspections there is an absence of specific SEN represented in schools, what SEN provision there is, how schools are working on clear accountable steps. For many parents with children identified with dyslexia, who are faced with so many international school choices school reports are of vital importance.

It is surely possible to harmonise with principals, SENCOs/SEN teachers, parents and the wider community to openly provide information and guidance for parents and the community towards the benefits of dyslexia and potential career paths that may suit learners with dyslexia. Engagement is an essential ingredient towards inclusion; therefore, a community of practice, working and sharing resources and linked with specialists and external assessors who have access into schools to offer more accurate supervision based on observations and teacher, parent and learner input. Furthermore, schools and parents would also benefit by engaging and agreeing on a definition for dyslexia so that effective intervention and support can be useful and measurable (Reid, 2013).

All schools must have a legitimate, recognized SEN department with full support from the senior leadership and the governing body responsible for school inspection reports in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. One significant finding is that there was the ineffective use of IEP's, which prevents any roadmap for effective support services for dyslexia (Lee-Tarver, 2006). Addressing research question 3a, one reason was the inconsistency of an IEP's value, creating effective learning targets and the necessary accommodations on how to reach learning targets and the way IEP's are used/not used amongst teachers across the school. For IEP's to effectively work then they need to communicate clearly amongst all stakeholders involved in supporting and managing dyslexia (Rotter, 2014) and not, as reported in the research being firmly placed on only the SEN department to be responsible for supporting dyslexia and learning.

Active engagement and seeking how learners with dyslexia learn and the challenges of the curriculum can also provide opportunities towards what Zhao (2012) advocates as a way of creativity towards education. Creative paths and subject choices in education will be an

advantage for learners with dyslexia and provide opportunities to avoid cycles of disadvantages when it comes to high-stakes testing in a traditional education system (research question 1, 2a). Moreover, pressures of school inspections and difficulties on students are placed by an expectation of downshifting curriculum in some schools and contexts when children are expected to read in kindergarten and follow a structured curriculum with subsequent high-stake tests. Often learners with dyslexia are creative thinkers: how can materials and the curriculum be more creative to accommodate dyslexia? Moreover, interestingly parents were the only participants to report and fully informed on different reading programmes they use at home, such as the 'Nessy reading program', and surely the benefits of these programmes could be implemented at schools and within resource centres.

Much more activity and financial support for dyslexia and SEN within both the community and in education is needed to address the lack of awareness and understanding towards dyslexia, reported by all the participants interviewed. Government funding for free public resource centres is needed to support the costs for assessing, diagnoses, awareness, understanding, support, necessary resources and a safe place for all the stakeholders to engage.

7.6 Effective Identification and Assessment

Difficulties with finding an educational psychologist to diagnose dyslexia in Dubai was reported as a challenge, due to not having adequate information on where and recommendations of whom to see. Another finding was that all the parents were fully aware their child had dyslexia and learning difficulties before their official assessment and this highlights the gap of inadequacy with identifying dyslexia earlier within a school (research question 2).

As the literature reflects that dyslexia is a broad definition for a condition that is continuously developing for the individual and, like a defective chameleon adapting to their environment, dyslexia cannot be easily seen. Instead, someone with dyslexia feels they are continually having difficulty adapting to the learning environment in which they are placed. One diagnosis for dyslexia is not enough and often parents will obtain assessments throughout their child's educational journey. Furthermore, dyslexia support should not be imposed or be

the same but adapted reflect the changes to their child's developing dyslexia and the different stages of a curriculum. Addressing research question 1, it was also worth noting, that the decision of all parents in this research stated that it was they who independently decided to obtain an external diagnosis for dyslexia, not the school, which disengages inclusion and support for dyslexia.

The tools for screening and diagnoses also need to be addressed, as tools to assess dyslexia will be different from those used for other SEN and may prove inconsistent and inaccurate (Cotton, Crewther and Crewther, 2005). However, multiple definitions of dyslexia across learning and language leads to a challenge when considering effective diagnoses and support (Stowe, 2000). It is not surprising, therefore, that the participants in this research have different and broad definitions for dyslexia. These different gaps reported with understanding dyslexia and inconsistencies add to the challenges towards effective support for dyslexia (Mather, White, and Youman, 2020).

7.7 Teacher Training

One key significant finding (research question 1,1a, 2a) was that the major barrier towards inclusion in schools is the little and ineffective training teachers have, funding training when it comes to understanding dyslexia, and how to modify teaching practice to accommodate for dyslexia. Schools need to address the main barriers reported for inclusion from parents which were misunderstanding and misinformation at schools regarding what dyslexia is and what it is not, and how it affects and impacts learning.

Once parents were formally provided with an assessment and the recommendations of support for dyslexia, teachers and schools' response was inconsistent with engagement and were ineffectively used with an IEP to support dyslexia across the school (research question 3a). Additionally, literature reports that there are no Arabic tools to effectively diagnose dyslexia, which is surprising as dyslexia is not immune across languages, and as Arabic is mandatory for all learners in the UAE this was a concern for four parents. Currently, schools must be responsible to understand how dyslexia manifests itself across languages (Everatt & Elbeheri, 2007) that are represented in their schools, particularly with Arabic (Elbeheri, Mafoudhi, and Everatt, 2009). Furthermore, those learners identified with dyslexia who

English is not their first language are further challenged by being taught and learn through English as the main language of instruction. More consideration and cross-cultural awareness (Tsakalaki, 2017) towards English being a difficult language, due to being an opaque language would benefit dyslexia support.

Continuous and updated training for teachers and SEN on how to respond effectively using necessary strategies and resources for learning in the curriculum from the recommendations in reports, with clear communication between the assessor, schools, and parents would be beneficial. Schools should form a focal point where whole-school approaches can be shared across different grassroots groups, Facebook groups, support groups in schools, and external support groups. Engagement, I believe, may help bring SEN policy to life.

7.8 Teachers Assessing Dyslexia

In Abu Dhabi, school principals reported that they would ask concerned teachers to ask parents' permission to assess children for potential signs of dyslexia and also reported that their schools had no specialists to formally diagnose dyslexia. Moreover, school inspection reports were broad when it came to information on specific support for learners, with dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty not appearing in any of the school inspection reports of dyslexia, but only the umbrella term of SEN, which may attract a one-size-fits-all approach towards any specific accommodations (Youman and Mather, 2013). With the absence of dyslexia in school inspection reports then there is a lack of transparency on what support and how dyslexia is managed at schools.

7.9 Implications for Further Research

This section delivers suggestions for further research, all of which are relevant to the ongoing SEN policies and advocates of dyslexia awareness, support and opportunities to create more understanding, with also different ways this research may be supported. Following up on the three themes, this research tested will form the foundation for future research.

7.9.1 Dyslexia Awareness Across Schools and the Community

Addressing research questions 2,3,1a and 3a, the first proposal regards the issues of inclusion being expressed as an elusive target, as reported by the school principals and highlighted through ineffective inclusive practice by teachers and SENCO/SEN teachers. There are ways and effective steps that can be drawn upon to implement inclusion and inclusive practice by taking a whole school approach (Reid, 2013) and a key school inclusion task force to implement, manage and support the transition (Stainback and Stainback, 1992). Schools need to address meetings by reflecting on:

- Advantages and disadvantages of current practices amongst teachers, supporting teachers and parents
- A list of benefits/good practice for supporting dyslexia/SEN.
- How IEPs can be created, monitored, shared and reached inside/outside
- the class and across the curriculum.
- Seek opportunities across the curriculum to provide alternative and
- Flexible approaches towards assessing and testing.

Based on the present research, I suggest schools and government allow assessors access into schools to not just assess, but also to observe students, who have been identified with dyslexia with teachers, and parents. Furthermore, assessors and specialist teachers can introduce and recommend strategies and ways that these can be implemented into the curriculum and across the school such as a key task force for inclusion (Stainback and Stainback, 1990). Could this be a way to improve parental engagement, early assessment and detection for dyslexia, raise awareness/understanding and improve inclusion and inclusive practices? Could an effective task force with all the stakeholders improve educational outcomes for students with dyslexia? Could an early effective task force provide learners to become more independent, empower learners with the confidence to sustain independently their support as their progress through school? Such research provides useful insights and sharing effective practice towards supporting, managing and engaging all the stakeholders involved in providing learning opportunities and avoiding cycles of disadvantages and inequality. Public resource and information centres could also address concerns about where to get screened for dyslexia and provide a safe place where engagement can support for all

those stakeholders involved with dyslexia. How effectively could a public resource centre improve support for dyslexia and serve inclusion and a community of practice?

Second, besides exploring schools in Abu Dhabi and parents' perceptions in Dubai, a further study on the relationship between inclusive strategies used in schools and whether these are effective with learners with dyslexia is suggested. This could be a focus on what works and how learners with dyslexia manage and support their dyslexia in education and within the wider community. One area of an effective community of sharing ideas and practise that can be explored is through the use of social media use by individuals with disabilities (Sweet, K., et al., 2019). This study of five schools and 10 parents could be extended in the UAE and other international schools when it comes to supporting and managing dyslexia, particularly for families who often move within, across international schools and countries.

7.9.2 Significance of Research

Dyslexia can be described as a hidden disability (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2014), with an estimated 4-10% of the population (European Dyslexia Association, 2019, British Psychological Society, 1999). My research findings explore barriers and obstacles for building knowledge and learning. Drawing on my findings of parental engagement, effective diagnoses and assessment and teacher training with dyslexia can assist with facilitating learning and provide ways to prevent the cycles of disadvantages in education. This research identified gaps with dyslexia not having an agreed definition and the inconsistent and inadequate process of early detection in schools and how professionals interpret dyslexia and support, which prevents inclusion and inclusive practices.

Inclusion is an ethical approach towards education which places equal value upon the knowledge and contributions of all who contribute to the collective production of meaning (Laluvein, 2008). However, inclusion is a complex system that does not just involve people, but also identities, cultures and discourses (Schulka, 2019). A community of practice towards inclusion recognises a non-didactic approach towards assessing and supporting learners with dyslexia who are challenged in mainstream education. Through specific issues expressed through the participants in my research and the findings can illuminate the challenges with inclusion, but importantly expose equally great opportunities to reflect and bring awareness

towards support through engagement and training (Miles and Singal, 2010).

Specific challenges identified towards inclusion in my research findings, funding, awareness for dyslexia, teacher training and assessment from being identified with dyslexia is pivotal for a deeper understanding amongst those communities who seek support and schools who seek the mechanisms for change by reflecting on existing beliefs and assumptions. Furthermore, my research in the UAE is timely as in 2020 the Dubai government, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) has announced that all Dubai private schools, currently standing at 194 schools, have to be 'fully inclusive'. Department for Education (2020) in Abu Dhabi has also committed to fully inclusive schools by 2024. To what extend will inclusion be challenged in the transition from schools to the larger community and across the UAE? As Dee (2000, p.232) notes any transition for inclusion cannot be 'separated from the influences of family, culture and community'.

Furthermore, what practical steps towards supporting this initiative in Dubai are addressed with the findings of this research: funding, teacher training, assessment and easy access for early detection for dyslexia? How is legislation and funding enforced in private schools in 2020 and how is the promotion of inclusive practices across Dubai going to impact other areas of education, colleges, universities, workplaces and the community? To what extent will Dubai's vision towards inclusion impact the capital of the UAE, Abu Dhabi? What will inclusion look like in public and private schools in the UAE? My research is placed during a historically significant paradigm shift towards a push for awareness and values which underpin inclusion in the UAE, with 2019 the first Special Olympics World Games in the middle east held in Abu Dhabi, fully inclusive schools in Abu Dhabi by 2024, (ADEK, 2020), 2021 EXPO in Dubai and legislation for fully inclusive private schools in Dubai by2021, who aim is to prioritise principles of 'diversity, equity, respect and acceptance' (KHDA, 2021, p.8).

The promotion of my research to be published is threefold. Firstly, my findings can be legitimately used to add general knowledge for the stakeholders that have been identified as having dyslexia, those who support and manage dyslexia in the UAE. Secondly, my research adds to the debate on inclusion and inclusive values and practices in and beyond education. Finally, using a critical realist approach can complement and further develop the evolution of

grounded methodology for future research through identifying and critique unobservable structures of SEN values of inclusion and inclusive policies and observe how people use these policies to support and manage dyslexia in schools and beyond. Furthermore, my research importantly adds to the gaps in the literature between the promotion of inclusive values explicitly placed in the existing SEN policies and the inconsistent way schools define and use inclusion in school. If these gaps exist then tensions and inclusion are impacted, which imperatively reinforces the barriers in education, (World Health Organisation, 2011).

Emphasis on engagement research, reflection amongst those who support dyslexia is imperative towards meaningful and sustainable steps for inclusion across schools. Furthermore, guidance, transparency, and accountability support are needed for schools transforming towards inclusion. My research also supports the current problems that exist towards effectively identifying dyslexia across languages and specifically in Arabic (Elbeheri, Mafoudhi, and Everatt, 2009), which for many is the beginning for supporting dyslexia. Dyslexia is common and has an impact on learning. Dyslexia is not a new phenomenon, but yet is it surprisingly and globally inconsistently identified and supported (Mather, White, and Youman, 2020). At an international level, this research firmly places a legitimate contribution towards the international debate that drives equity within inclusion in education. Although my research exposes the gaps, challenges, and barriers for learners with dyslexia I believe the journey for inclusion that countries and international schools take is empirical to removing the impossible barriers that prevent early screening and identification and implement possible creative opportunities, which provides fair educational outcomes. Furthermore, stakeholders have both legitimate and professional responsibilities to follow SEN policy and create continuous learning support and target learning needs that are needed to removing barriers to learning effectively for those learners with dyslexia.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Email Outlining Research

Participant name_____

Informed consent

I would like to invite you to take part in the above-named study, but before you decide, please read the following information.

What is the purpose of this study?

For my doctoral research in education at the University of Bath, UK, I am currently investigating the way dyslexia is supported at schools and in the wider community. I hope this research data will illuminate parental support, effective identification and assessment, teacher training and also ways to overcome any organisational obstacles towards inclusion.

Your rights as a research participant

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous. Information gathered during the research will be used solely for the purpose of this study and all efforts will be made to ensure the confidentiality of participants' personal information. Please note that while your name will be recorded with the data, it will not be used in the report. All identifiable data will be stored securely on a computer with password-restricted access and only the researcher (and doctoral supervisors if applicable), and ethics committee members will have access to it.

If you decide not to participate, there will not be any negative consequences. Please be aware that if you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time and your data will be returned to you or destroyed. You may also decide not to answer any specific question.

The procedure will involve taping the interview, and the tape will be transcribed word for word. Your results will be confidential, and you will not be identified individually.

Please sign the informed consent form signalling your willingness to participate.

Signature_____

Name _____

Date _____

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview. I really appreciate you taking the time to do this. I may contact you in the future for a follow-up interview. Again, let me assure you of the confidentially of your response and identity. If you have any questions feel free to contact me by email: [redacted]

Appendix 2: A Summary of international, national and literature on SEN policy

Year	**United Kingdom**
1944	*Educational Act*: children with special educational needs (such as dyslexia), were characterised by their disabilities and defined/labelled in medical terms, for example, needing medical treatment for special needs.
1978–1981	*The Warnock Report Special Educational Needs* and *Education Act* introduced special educational needs (SEN) and the term 'integrative', which later became the conceptual framework of an inclusive approach towards education and 'a political process involving negotiation, bargaining and compromise between education and government' (Welton and Evans, 1986).
1991	The *Warnock framework* from the *Warnock Report on Special Educational Needs* (1978) resulted in the shift from 'special schools' to identifying learners entering mainstream schools. This was based on the professional identification of learners having special educational needs. The SEN label sought legitimacy to determine a fair outcome for support (Hollenweger, 2008).
1994	The *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (COP)* was aimed at providing Local Educational Authorities with

	guidance on responsibilities and 'statuary duties' of making effective decisions for early interventions for children with SEN. The COP included Learning Education Assistants, parental engagement, pupil participation and the involvement of other agencies.
1997	The *Green Paper Excellence for All Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs* provided public awareness towards SEN and inclusiveness, including working with parents and families, applying the COP in mainstream schools, planning SEN provision, and cooperation between local agencies and government.
2001	The *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act* (SENDA) outlined more legislation relating to the rights of pre- and post-16-year-olds with disabilities in education, including treating them 'less favourably' due to their disability/difference.
2004	*Removing barriers to achievement: The government's strategy for SEN*. The aim of this policy was to improve on early intervention with local authorities, build on gaps in support for parents and sharing of information with families and set out short-, medium-, and long-term objectives.
2004	*Special education needs and disability: Towards inclusive schools.* This document outlined, through Ofsted how mainstream schools were prepared for children with special needs. It also reported on attitudes of some schools

	towards children with SEN whose needs were not adequately addressed and for whom inclusive education was a challenge. Support for SEN also varied.
2009 2009	The *Lamb Inquiry* found that parents need information towards understanding more about their child's needs to make sure they get the right support, as well as easy ways to find trustworthy information, which can lead to wider aspects of learning outcomes at school. *Inclusion Development Programme* *Primary/Secondary* aimed to commit to providing continuing professional development for mainstream professionals in meeting children with SEN. This was first outlined in Removing Barriers to Achievement, which was provided to head teachers. This programme included specifically interactive materials for dyslexia, self-evaluation tools for progressing learners with dyslexia, and mapping progress for individuals and schools on provision and support for learners with dyslexia.
2010	The *Equality Act* introduced Parliamentary Acts focused on discrimination on the grounds that people with a disability should be provided with the same access and provision as those without disabilities. (Norwich, Warnock and Terzi) Warnock Special Educational needs: A new look reported that another commission

2010	should review the SEN situation, particularly the concept of inclusion to gain a better understanding of the link between social disadvantage and SEN.
2011	*Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability.* This consultation document aimed to address the concerns highlighted by the findings of the *Lamb Inquiry* (2009), 'where parents feel they have to battle for the support they need, where they are passed from pillar to post, and where bureaucracy and frustration face them at every step' (Michael Gove cited by the Department for Education, 2011a, p.2).
2014	*SEND Hollinger code of practice: 0 to 25 years.* This was aimed at re-evaluating inclusion across local authorities and the country. The report noted that family voice was disengaged and lost when it came to making decisions about support for children. Further, there was no extension to support beyond 16, with the formal leaving age extended to 18, requiring further support. The other change related to terminology, with dyslexia (together with other SEN) referred to as Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), as the previous label was considered broad and restrictive. Dyslexia now became a 'cognitive and learning difficulty'.
2017-2018	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy 2017-2018. The aim of this policy was to continuously

	address the areas of Identification, Assessment and Provision and included Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the whole school. All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs and teaching such children is, therefore, a whole school responsibility.

A Summary of the USA SEN Policies

Year	United States of America
1973	*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* First civil rights law to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities/special educational needs.
1986	*Handicapped Children's Protection Act of 1986.* All children with special needs should be taught within the public education system.
1990	*Americans with Disabilities Act.* People with special needs should be given the same rights as everybody else at school and in the workplace.

2002	*No Child Left Behind Act.* This act focused on all children being proficient in maths and reading.
2004	*Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA*) authorised early intervention services for learners with special educational needs.
2015	*United States Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services* states that some local educational authorities are reluctant to reference 'dyslexia' and other SEN to avoid eligibility of meeting the criteria for support and screening. Now dyslexia must be mentioned on the learner's Individual Education Program (IEP), and effective support and intervention must be adhered to in schools.

A Summary of International SEN Policies, including the UAE.

Year	International and United Arab Emirates
1989	*Convention of the Rights of the Child.* Article 23: recognised that children with special needs should receive effective support, education, and the fullest possible social integration, as well as individual development.

1993	*Standard Rules of Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities* provided a framework that was a 'legally binding instrument. The Standard Rules represent a strong moral and political commitment of Governments to take action to attain equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities.
1994	The Salamanca Statement and Framework For Action On Special Needs Education conference on Special Needs Education, Salamanca Spain. Fifty-two member states submitted their progress, excluding 'financing of education' and teaching training', although 'parents' were included (p.4). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education report stated that in 22 countries, there was 'less information available as to identification, assessment and orientation' (p.43) when it comes to children with learning difficulties. Only six countries provided 'monitoring progress by way of special individual teaching plans, counselling, provision for records and formal reviews' (p.44). In 24 countries, it was reported that parents had not significant legislation in their role towards 'identification, assessment, orientation and integration' with special needs education.
1996	*Legislation Pertaining to Special Needs Education* (UNESCO). The findings of this report were shared with 52 member states.

2006	*Federal Law No. 29/2006 Regarding Rights of the People with Special Needs* (UAE). *Article (12)* guaranteed that people with special needs would have equal opportunities for obtaining education in all educational institutions, educational and vocational centres for training. *Article (13)* presented a commitment in taking appropriate measures with concerned authorities to 'provide educational diagnosis and curricula, easy methods and techniques for teaching purposes', and 'a strong communication method to communicate with people with special needs and developing alternative strategies. *Article (14)* 'shall provide academic disciplines to equip the people working with the people with special needs and their families both in the areas of diagnosis and early detection, educational, social, psychological, medical or vocational rehabilitation and to ensure to provision of training programs during the service to equip the staff with expertise and modern knowledge'. *Article (15)* ensured equal opportunities for education for all people with special needs, and to 'develop educational plans to keep up the spirit of the age and technical sophistication' for special needs, 'providing advice, technical and educational assistance to all educational institutions that wish to receive people with special needs and considering requests for funding for the equipment and technologies'.

Appendix 3a: Summary of the Interviews

	Principles of Schools
	SENCO/SEN Teacher
	Footnotes

SENCO/Teacher responses

Research Questions	**Principle 1 + SENCO**	**Principle 2 + SENCO**	**Principle 3 + SENCO**	**Principle 4 + SENCO**	**Principle 5 + Teacher**
	British Curriculum School	**International Baccalaureate School**	**Indian Curriculum School**	**UAE Local Public School**	**American Curriculum School**
1. What do you understand by dyslexia?	'brain is wired slightly differently' 'Dyslexia is having difficulties with learning'	'I would describe it as a child or an adult who finds it difficult in writing forms who then finds it difficulty with the	'Dyslexia is a psychological condition in which a person is having, who suffers from a reading problem, writing problem'	'Someone who has been effected with writing and difficulty to read' 'dyslexia is a problem with	'A lot of problems with reading' 'problems with reading, writing and phonics, spelling'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
		communication forms' 'it is a broad range of difficulties with reading and word recognition' 'it is a broad range of difficulties with reading and word recognition'	'it can be many things, but difficulties with reading, phonics and writing'	reading, writing, many things'	
2. In your experience, how do you support a learner with dyslexia?	'First of all, we have to identify it we would ask teachers who have concerns and then we would	'We are lucky to have someone who can make assessments, with parental permission,	'First of all it is very difficult to find out the problem with the patient of dyslexia, detecting it. but when	'In my experience we do not have anyone who is specialist in this field, so when we had a student with a	'Get reading books which are suitable and give extra time'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	ask parents to get a formal assessment' 'once we get reports, we can support and get extra time in exams for students' 'reports, which have to be done outside, we have someone who we contact, who flies in from the UK, you have to book …we could allow people into the school for assessments, but with local regulations you would need CV's,	then we are able to put systems in place' 'Once we receive assessments, we make manageable SMART targets that we discuss with the teachers. These get monitored and addressed regularly'	it comes to reading or writing his intelligence and the outcomes of reading and writing don't match, so we find that he is suffering from some problems.' 'We do not have any facility inside the school to do assessments.' 'Get assessments first is needed, then understanding learning difficulties	problem, we do not know what to do and we would see them as only having, being weak in reading' 'We get specialists to do tests to help students, our children'	'We use internal assessments to find any difficulties and then set learning targets with the teachers'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	background checks in advance' 'If we obtain an assessment from a specialist, we work with teachers to support learning'		and assess these continually'		
3. What do you understand by the term inclusion?	'I think inclusion is students being in school and there is a provision enabling them able to access the curriculum and test, so my philosophical belief is that once we have excepted students we have to, we have a	'inclusion is being able to cater for all students needs' 'Inclusion is part of accepting and recognising all children's needs,	'Inclusion is not directly only related to dyslexia it is about all types of learner. Inclusion is that when we include all students into our planning, teaching and learning, activities we try to include all students	'It means that those people, let's say with disabilities, not so severe that they can put them in the classroom, with some assistance and that they should be not separated into certain classes or placed out of the school'	'giving learning chances to all children, even special children' 'giving the same chances, learning chances to all learners'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	commitment to ensure that they can be included in school to access the curriculum.' 'If severe learning needs, we might not be able to cater for that person' 'It is not easy; schools should address all learners needs'	although reality it is difficult'	with any sort of problems with normal, below average, above average so that all students are challenged in education and activities and then everybody is learning, everybody is making progress, and this is what I understand.' 'providing learning for all students''	'all children, girls and boys together learning'	

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
4. In your view, what would an 'inclusion school' look like?'	'Ideally a dream position, but it is beyond our school, we need more specialists in the school or provision from outside' 'A school who does something, rather than talk about it, to convince all teachers to help SEN children'	'I would say in my experience that it is something very hard to get in our school because of funding for resources' 'addressing all the learning needs of learners'	'I think inclusion that all school must be inclusive, as a matter of policy as I have seen in my 25 years of experience in the field of education I have seen some special needs students making good progress, falling in the mainstream of education and it is helped those unfortunate students to get better in their lives and over their hardships in their lives'	'Like any other school, classroom, in each classroom there would be a number of students with special needs with the right equipment who understand those students.' 'teachers, good teachers, all together helping all children with learning in class'	'a well-resourced school, lots of suitable materials with special training for teachers' 'all classrooms provide necessary resources and equipment for all children'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
			‘Although my school is special in terms of that we accept all students, but there is another angle which I feel sorry about, that we parents are suffering round the clock hardships and there is a financial burden on these parents because our school does not offer such services’ ‘classrooms, materials, resources which all children learn’		

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
5. In your opinion, what are the factors which act as barriers towards inclusion in your school?	'knowledge of the person's needs' 'Parents are not open because they think it would discriminate against that child, so I think dialogue is really important' 'convincing all teachers in this school to change and adapt' 'Not all parents are understanding of getting assessed and early detection'	'Many young teachers would probably say that they do not have much experience, they would be able to refer that child on and be able to say they have difficulties, but I think there are many teachers, myself included that would find it quite difficult with knowing exactly what to do with a dyslexic child'	'Funding supporting staff in one barrier. we get sometimes complaints from parents that do not have special needs students do not appreciate and accept and they feel that this support will hamper the progress of their child, So they object to this support and say that such children should be not accepted in the school'	'Lack of expertise is the main one. This is the main barrier. We need specialist people, more in the school to handle in our school those students' 'getting right training and experts in dyslexia to train all people in school'	'not understanding children's needs, especially dyslexia and other needs' 'teachers don't know how to use materials and make resources for children with dyslexia' 'teachers not following, effectively targets'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
		'Parents complaining that we are not supportive enough' 'not having enough funding for materials and not knowing problems children have'	'funding, resources and help with children who have many difficulties in learning'		
6. As the UAE has in parts a segregated system of education between public / private/ gender settings do you think this influences SEN and Inclusion? How?	'Absolutely, Yep, there is a perception between public and private can be perceived as two different types of quality' 'People think if we are a British curriculum, we must	'Not that I have really noted, we are a co-education school and just get on with the inclusiveness for everyone, gender and nationality would not get in the way'	'I think that now schools are getting better, whether if it special parking, ramps, special gates, entrance/exit, a lift for special needs I believe that the government are doing their job by saying	'No I don't think so, the problem in my opinion is that inclusion is a new idea in the UAE, with time it will develop, it only really started in my school 5 years ago'	'To be honest private international schools have more funding for sporting special learners' 'No, I don't think these matters in my experience'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	have British supporting teachers" 'No, not really, some children don't like to be pulled out of class'	'No, not in this school, but some schools I have worked in are different, have different feelings, do things differently… I have a mixed experience'	this to schools, but in education I am not convinced.' 'parents bring their children here as international schools turn them away'	'we teach boys – girls separated, and boys need more support'	
7. In what ways do you think teacher's knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials in learning can affect inclusion for learners with dyslexia?	'I think the important one is attitude, the skills you can learn' 'I can think of staff of different gender, different age and different phases in the school that embrace it, but there are different people	'even with one hour of training that we give new teachers they don't have enough training. Knowledge to be able to support children'	'Unfortunately, I do not feel that the teaching staff are well trained for teaching to children who have dyslexia, not very skilled in dealing with such issues'	'I don't think that currently that most of those people teaching in schools who are educated in schools have a degree in certain subjects, but they don't have any skills to deal with those areas of	'most teachers do not cope in class, as they do not have the skills to differentiate, with so many children in class' 'we get new teachers, often and some

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	who don't.' 'older staff or more experienced staff because there may not been much information around when they trained as teachers' 'A lot, some teachers really put a lot of effort are brilliant and change their resources, some teachers, older ones sometimes don't really read reports we give them'	'Knowledge and attitudes with SEN are different, some teachers it is a shock to change their practice'	'We have many teachers with different knowledge, understanding, some good, some not so good with dealing with support'	dyslexia for example.' 'some teachers not experts, don't know what to do and need us to help'	experienced with special needs and some teachers this is not the case'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
8. Which areas do you feel that this school needs more support?	'a curriculum that is tailored for them because there are certain mainstream things that not be relevant for them or something that they don't want to accept' 'Time and funding to train teachers and assistants in early detection and support'	'I think, especially in the middle east we need support in all areas with special needs and inclusion' Here we don't have any of that and some of those assessments and discussion are quite pricey. Getting an assessment can cost up to 5000 dirhams and sometimes that is a barrier for parents to do that, the cost is too high'	'I believe that our staff need to be helped with training to be able to fully understand these different problems, not only being able to support students, but also being able to observe students and how to detect because there are many students we know there have special needs, but there many other students that we may not know and they may be suffering	'We need two things; we need more people who are specialist to be appointed in the school and more training to teachers in this area' 'What we have now is a department with just two people in the department which is not enough in a school who has 1800 students' 'more help, more support teachers'	'We need more discussion, more help with supporting, teacher training' 'once relying on reports, stronger connections and awareness in all levels of the school about these learners'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
		'getting children with learning problems assessed regularly'	from such issues, so we need training from the staff' 'training and funding teachers to do courses ... we have one teacher who has completed an online phonics course for dyslexia, but here courses are not easy to find'		
9. Do you think class sizes a factor in this school for inclusion? Why/Why not?	'There is no proof that class sizes matter. It could mean that the large class means that there is a narrower class	'I feel that we are very careful in our selection of students, so we would have only one special needs student in per	'In India there are sometimes twice as many students in the class compared to hear, so it is very well controlled here I	'For sure, the less students, the more possibilities for teachers to follow up with people with special needs'	'If the class size is big, like in this school, 18-25, then it is hard to support and give the time for

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	differentiation and quality' 'No, if you have assistants who help in class'	class and when we fill up these places, we are very honest with parents…that we cannot take any more special needs students because we don't feel we have staffing capacity to support them' 'No, I take children out of class if they struggle and we have 2 class assistants in their class who help'	think our class sizes are big enough and I think if you have the right support for the students the size does not matter' 'not really'	'yes, we have too many sometimes in one class and it causes problems'	learners who have dyslexia' 'teachers have complained that size matters when supporting and helping children with dyslexia and the pacey curriculum'
10. What changes would you like to see that could help	'SEN support would be on a needs basis. I	'I think it is interesting that every	'Assessment and how to assess dyslexia is a	'I would like to see a teacher assistant in	'outside help, government and more

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
inclusion in international schools (in the UAE)?	personally believe is students can access the school with the attitude that they can do it then we should welcome this.' 'parents need to realistic and understand what support we offer' 'mandatory training for teachers not only for dyslexia, but all SEN'	school must have a school counsellor in the UAE, but not every school have a special needs teacher that is really surprising as in this country they really want students to be 21st learners, who really promote learning to a high standard you would think that special needs would have a higher priority and that there would be centres around Abu Dhabi/ Dubai'	problem and I have raised this issue with many ADEK'S meetings and there was no satisfactory response to it.' 'parents understanding on funding, on what, how we support special students' 'teachers and parents need help for supporting dyslexia' 'sharing ideas of support and serious awareness'	each class, with proper training in dealing with dyslexia' 'More training for parent and teachers at our school could help' 'We need more training and government support and money'	serious discussion and activity in this area' 'we need training, support and early intervention for support. Even parents get involved'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
		‘parents need to get their children with dyslexia assessed, some parents don’t really do this, and this makes it difficult in class’ ‘more awareness and opportunities to learn about dyslexia in the community’			
11. How does this school fund SEN inclusion at this school? Is this adequate do you feel?	‘Our learning support provision is paid by parents, so a percentage of the fees is taken off. There is	‘Parents could pay more up to 6-7000, some parents, some parents refused to pay more than 3000	‘These students have to pay double, which is approved by ADEK because we say that we provide	‘Honestly not much, we have made a special room for SEN students and the SEN teacher for different	‘Parents help pay 2000-3000 (AED) for class assistants’

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	a group of student's parents which pay 30% of the annual fee, and that is for those students who require a one to one continuous support' 'We do get a department budget, which is very tight'	and that is a barrier towards the support that the child is given.' 'I get a budget in this department…we have some difficulties if we need more assistants'	them with counsellors and special staff and because we want them to have a shadow teacher in the classroom' 'The money we receive is not spent on facilities for special needs, but just for the assistant who helps the students' 'We get a budget from the school fees and parents pay extra	activities to the ones they struggle within classrooms' 'we get funding from the government for books, support assistant, we don't get money like other schools get, they get more'	

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
			for support classes after school'		
12. What kind of learning possibilities and choices for learners with dyslexia are there in the curriculum in this school? Do you think this is enough?	There is no restrictions. We have bought in more vocational skills in 'This year BTEC. We are the only SCHOOL in Abu Dhabi who run the BTEC (Vocational) programme, we have bought in engineering, sports science and business studies, we are	'Maybe some one-to-one work with some students with our special need's teacher, they may be withdrawn they might be supported in the classroom, but we try to ensure that their coverage is the same work they do is scaffolded a bit better or a bit differently, like coloured gels, a	'No, I do not think we have anything special in the curriculum. It is the same curriculum, but sometimes we provide them with a worksheet at an easier level, with the question paper, which is slightly bigger, with bigger fonts'	'No, no, the only thing is at all we give those with dyslexia and with special needs we reduce the amount of material they need to cover because they cannot keep up with the same material as the others in class, they need to cover less objectives for examples if the class	'In this school we give extra time during school time and class time' 'teachers are told to make material easy to read' 'the American curriculum is broad, but learners, learners

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	thinking of bringing in more' 'Yes, I feel that subjects, vocational ones can offer good choice'	different pencil grip or whatever, or whatever is needed to help them' 'The higher IB levels learners with dyslexia need more support with their exam studies and essays and need more help'	'We help students with making materials easier'	has four objectives in class they will have to cover two and this gives them more time to study' 'We have more math and science, which is good, but more support in Arabic for children who cannot, is not their native language'	with difficulties like dyslexia can sometimes find it hard preparing for standard SAT's in secondary'
13. What do you think needs to be done to transform schools into inclusive schools for	'Breadth of subject choice, open attitude to those learners'	'a unit in the school of various specialities so that the school has a broad band of	'I think we and all staff need to be trained to be able to deal with children. I	'If the government is serious about the idea then they need to be	'Give more time and choice in the curriculum, Arabic is compulsory, but it is

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
SEN learners and provide a community or practice inside and reflect the wider community?	'Not all parents get their children assessed because of cost and lack of trained assessors'	support in school, we've got the counsellors, dyslexic specialists' 'more options in IB for learners with difficulties, academic choices are limited here' 'Some parents don't understand enough about challenges of the diploma programme'	don't think the teacher has experience, proper qualifications to know about dyslexia and how to deal with this and this is very very important' 'as sometimes you consider that all students are OK, and you may be unaware that students are suffering' 'more support with training, government awareness campaigns'	serious about the budget' 'parents need to tell us about their children before they start school, with problems learning…some parents, we never see at parent term meetings'	difficult for learners with reading difficulties in their first language' 'Parents need to understand the pressure schools are under and the limited support we have'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
14. How does the IEP assist with learning differences? How do you think these are effectively used by teachers?	'For me it is a guide, it assists people, it travels around staff, but I don't want it to be a document that is fixed forever, as some students progress differently, and this should be continually reviewed as well'. 'I feel there is a mixed approach of how effectively they are used some staff	'Well I think that some teachers haven't had that much access to knowing how to fill them in. I have found that sometimes when I have actually looked at them, they have put targets that are not achievable or manageable. What I always say that you need small steps of success.'	'Yes, on paper and on file this is important, but I do not find these effective, very helpful practically.' 'if we get any assessments some teachers think it is our job to support'	'Now for dyslexic students I feel that this is not being translated correctly at times' 'all teachers train to use these in classes with learners, sometimes but the number of learners make it hard to track'	'teachers do not often include too many targets which are not clear or easy to achieve for these learners'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	embrace these and use it well. There are some staff that come in and say that this is the way I teach, no differentiation, so be it.' 'We add necessary targets, which we monitor regularly with teachers'	'We use a learner passport, which each child uses in their classes, which has targets, learning targets they need, and teachers use this in class and sign off when targets are met'			
15. In your experience how does the pressure from educational outcomes put	'I think it puts pressure on every student and unfortunately, the	'I keep talking that, my goodness if we don't get 75% in A Grades, we would be	'It puts a lot of pressure on students, schools and teachers and this is why many	'We still don't recognise in this culture any understanding of	'It does seem that targets and test results drive most schools'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
pressure on students with learning difficulties and schools to be inclusive?	keys to get our academic achievements.' 'Sometimes pressure is good but you have manageable, you can't get pressure that makes you crumble and we have had a couple of students who have crumbled, and we have had to deal with this on a guidance role and that is whole system we are in. Unfortunately, I see this as getting worse,	considered to be a failing school.' 'Therefore, we will never get these grades or in our ADEK inspections the likely hood we would be weak in every inspection and does not mean we are weak, it means that the children are not making the progress that is in align with the UK curriculum.' 'parents don't realise that the Diploma	'good schools do not accept such children' 'Regular assessment in the class you are OK, you can adapt for learners, you have control, it is your internal exam, you can change to suit students, but what about external examinations, are seen on league table results like PISA' 'We are under pressure with supporting students	dyslexia. I met with parents and when we tell them (parents) that we need a report to understand because we feel that your son might have this, they say what do you mean a report, do you mean that we need to go to a psychiatric, why are you asking me this, what is wrong with my son, it is the problem with your school.'	'Children with special needs are not really taken into consideration when targets are used in the media'

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	more and more pressure. There is no room for learning support, this is not recognised' 'I feel that this is the way education is going unfortunately, but it is hard for me to convince learners at times that grades are not everything'	program is tough children with learning difficulties have few options in this school, not like in our school in Dubai, where options, more options are available'	and getting grades, good grades from parents'	'School ADEK inspections and test marks are making teachers leave'	
FIELD NOTES	**British International School** ***SEN Department and class for one to***	**IB School** ***Sen meeting small room/ staff room, with no visual***	**Indian School** ***Book shelve for one to one, teacher made materials, large font***	**Public School** ***Many Arabic and English books, posters and two***	**American school** ***Teacher training materials on special needs, book (AR)***

Research Questions	Principle 1 + SENCO	Principle 2 + SENCO	Principle 3 + SENCO	Principle 4 + SENCO	Principle 5 + Teacher
	one with materials (reading) engaging posters for supporting reading ***Website:*** ***states that the school has three qualified Special Educational Needs Teachers*** ***And 'take our lead from the British Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014).***	***materials or equipment visually, flip chart and board*** ***Website:*** ***'identification of such difficulties the school will seek to put in place additional educational provision and/or resources, which may require additional costs'***	***books and overlays, basic materials (no technology).*** ***Website:*** ***No information on SENs on the website.***	***computers, one not working, one with damaged headphones*** ***Website:*** ***Follows UAE Federal Law No. 26-2006 to protect the rights of individuals with disability. It encourages the inclusion and integration of the individuals 'with special needs'.***	***reading levels, coloured pens, whiteboard and one computer*** ***Website:*** ***'specialists closely collaborate with class teachers to help provide differentiated instruction for students who may be exhibiting difficulties in meeting classroom expectations'***

Appendix 3a: A Summary of the Interview Questions and Open Codes to Categories

Interview questions	Open codes to categories
1. What do you understand by dyslexia?	**Principals, SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Different definitions reported by principles, SENCO, SEN teacher: Reading, writing, phonics, spelling
2. In your experience, how do you support a learner with dyslexia?	**Principals** reported Ask teachers with concerns-then ask parents' permission to assess them No specialist available **SENCO/SEN Teacher** reported Get specialists to assess externally then set learning support and targets
3. What do you understand by the term inclusion?	**Principals and SENCO, SEN teacher** reported provision for all
4. In your view, what would an 'inclusion school' look like?'	**Principals** reported 'Ideally, a dream position' hard to obtain, should be policy that teachers are trained to support students with SEN/dyslexia **SENCO/SEN Teacher** reported Schools need to do more for inclusion, Convincing teachers to support learners, Teachers do not understand how to support dyslexia Not having effective equipment
5. In your opinion, what are the factors which act as barriers towards inclusion in your school?	**Principals** reported Teachers knowledge and experience. Parents do not want their children identified with SEN, **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Parents not understanding about early detection Getting the right training for teachers Lack of funding for support

Interview questions	Open codes to categories
6. As the UAE has in parts a segregated system of education between public/private/gender settings, do you think this influences SEN and Inclusion? How?	**Principals** reported Differences in quality of SEN support, inclusion between public and private education systems Schools are starting to get better for inclusion **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Some kids like to separate in class for SEN support Schools are different towards inclusion Not all schools here (in Abu Dhabi) are the same Boys and girls are separated
7. In what ways do you think teacher's knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials in learning can affect inclusion for learners with dyslexia?	**Principals** reported Attitude is more important than skills to support learners with dyslexia Training and knowledge to support children is needed **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Age of the teacher makes a difference in accepting change Knowledge and attitude of the teacher
8. Which areas do you feel that this school needs more support?	**Principals** reported A curriculum changes towards supporting dyslexia and inclusion in the Middle East External funding with costs of assessments Training, specialist teachers **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Funding, getting learners assessed regularly, training, connections and engagements within the school
9. Do you think class sizes a factor in this school for inclusion? Why/Why not?	**Principals** reported Mixed responses, NO class sizes do not make a difference, and large classes would be difficult to give time to support learners with dyslexia **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported No, if you have assistants, if you take the learners out of class Yes, too many learners with dyslexia of SEN in one class

Interview questions	Open codes to categories
	can be difficult
10. What changes would you like to see that could help inclusion in international schools (in the UAE)?	**Principles** reported Parents need to understand what support is given at schools Support teachers are not a priority in schools, as much as counsellors The opportunity to assess learners who may have dyslexia **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Mandatory training to support dyslexia in schools Sharing ideas and serious awareness Parental involvement and opportunities
11. How does this school fund SEN inclusion at this school? Is this adequate do you feel?	**Principals** reported Parents pay different rates (30% school fees-6-7000). All schools were different, and this was approved by ADEK **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Budgets for the SEN department is very tight, causes difficulties for materials and assistants
12. What kind of learning possibilities and choices for learners with dyslexia are there in the curriculum in this school? Do you think this is enough?	**Principals** reported One school offers vocational routes (BTEC) Others offer to take out of class Coloured pens Keep with the same curriculum, but provide extra worksheets Teachers told to make the material easier Not enough changes to the curriculum, as there are demands on time and amount of work to cover Difficulties in supporting/ preparing during exam times **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported IB at the higher levels need more support More support for Arabic second language is needed American SAT exams need more support
13. What do you think needs	**Principals** reported

Interview questions	Open codes to categories
to be done to transform schools into inclusive schools for SEN learners and provide a community or practice inside and reflect the wider community?	Breadth of subject choice, open attitude A range of specialist support Staff training and qualifications on dyslexia Awareness on the wide difficulties' students have with dyslexia Government funding More time, choice in the curriculum, as Arabic is compulsory more support for first language Parents need to understand the pressure schools are under with limited options support **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported All parents need to get children assessed Parents need to communicate learning problems with their children and more parental engagement at parents' evenings More trained assessors More options in IB and parents understanding of the difficulties in the diploma programme
14. How does the IEP assist with learning differences? How do you think these are effectively used by teachers?	**Principals** reported Just a document that it is not fixed and travels around the staff Not accessed by all staff Not effective, not practical Teachers don't understand them Teachers often use too many unreachable targets **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Reachable targets monitored regularly Some teachers think it is only our responsibility to support Too many students to support We use a learner passport which travels around the staff and is stamped each day, at the end of the week we review
15. In your experience, how	**Principals** reported

Interview questions	Open codes to categories
does the pressure from educational outcomes put pressure on students with learning difficulties and schools to be inclusive?	Puts too much and unnecessary pressure on students to achieve A misguided perception that if we do not get A grade results, we are failing as a school. It doesn't consider these learners from ADEK inspections. We still do not fully recognise dyslexia in this culture Parents are worried about being approached to get their children assessed, as the potential label of dyslexia is perceived negatively as a mental issue **SENCO, SEN teacher** reported Unfortunately, education is going this way, and it is hard to convince students that results are not everything We do not have enough options in our school We are under a lot of pressure to support students Pressure of ADEK inspections to achieve is making teachers leave

FIELD NOTES

The observation of the SEN departments provided different resources to support SEN and dyslexia.

School Websites

One school had no information on SEN.

The remaining schools claimed to either follow international SEN policy (British Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) and the UAE Federal Law No. 26-2006, which aims 'to protect the rights of individuals with disability' and 'encourages inclusion and integration of the individuals 'with special needs'.

One school website claimed to work closely with teachers to provide differentiated instruction for students who may be exhibiting difficulties in meeting classroom expectations.

Appendix 3b: Axial Coding Stages: Three categories and Parent Interview Questions

The three main research questions are in bold: **(1) Parental engagement/ involvement, (2) Effective identification and assessing learners with dyslexia, (3) Teaching training and understanding of dyslexia?**

A) To what degree are parents involved with the school and supporting their child's dyslexia?

Parent Interview Questions

1) *How much involvement is there between yourself and with your child's school with the way your child/s dyslexia are supported and managed?*
2) *In your experience, is your child's school receptive towards parental engagement when it comes to dyslexia awareness, support and the way dyslexia is managed?*
3) *How does your school support learning at home?*
4) *What do you think needs to be done in the way schools combine and manage inclusion with supporting learners with dyslexia?*
5) *What are the main factors that act as learning barriers for parents with children who have dyslexia and schools?*
6) *In your view, what does an inclusive school look like?*
7) *In your opinion, what are the factors, which act as barriers towards inclusion and support at your school?*
8) *What challenges do you face as a parent of a child with dyslexia in school and the wider community?*

B) Effective identification and assessing learners with dyslexia?

9) *Has your child been assessed externally/ internally? How many times have you had your child assessed for dyslexia?*
10) *At what stage did you decide/told to get your child assessed? Was this based on a school recommendation? -Who made the recommendation (teacher, support teacher?).*
11) *How easy/difficult was it to get an assessment for dyslexia for your child in Dubai/elsewhere?*

12) *Is/did the cost impact your decision on obtaining an assessment for your child/children?*

13) *As a parent, how did you feel from the dyslexia diagnoses, and what did you do once you received the results?*

C) Teaching training and understanding of dyslexia?

14) *What kind of dyslexia support is there available at your child's school?*

15) *Do you know what training teachers/school have to support dyslexia at your school?*

16) *In your experience, what kind of challenges do you think teachers and schools face with managing, supporting learners with dyslexia?*

17) *Do you think teachers age, experience makes any differences with attitudes towards supporting your child/s dyslexia in the class and across the curriculum?*

18) *Do you feel your child's teachers are experienced and have qualifications with supporting and managing dyslexia in their classes? Why/why not?*

19) *What factors do you think act as barriers towards the inclusion, support and the way dyslexia are managed in class and the school?*

20) *What would you like schools and the wider community do to support learners with dyslexia?*

Appendix 4: Text of Email and Summaries Sent to Interviewees

Dear_____,

I would like to thank you again for taking part in my EdD research. I am sending you a transcript of the interview recording I did. Please, review and let me know if this is a this is an accurate summary of what you reported. If there is anything you would like to change, then please let me know.

I would also like your permission to use this information as part of my EdD and future presentations/ publications. As you can see, I have respectively taken any names of participants and schools to avoid any identification issues, as mentioned before our interviews.

Thank you once again for your valuable time, insights and providing me with your contributions to dyslexia support/management and the community of practice in your school.

Kind regards,

Christopher Blake